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[The Editor will be pleased to consider manuscripts if accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. He accepts no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

Events of the Week.

WITH a dry and formal ceremony the technicalities were completed last Saturday which put the Treaty of Versailles into force. The Germans have gained a few points by making a somewhat prolonged argumentative stand. The sentences of the final protocol, which seemed to mean that if France alleged any imperfection in the fulfilment of the Treaty she was free to invade without more ado, have been explained away, and Germany has the assurance, for what it may be worth, that she retains her common rights under international law. The demand for harbor material has been reduced by about a quarter, though it is still a crushing and crippling exaction. Lastly a pledge, which seems watertight, has been given by France that the German war prisoners shall all now be released, and indeed their repatriation has begun. On the other hand the attempt to secure some modification of the procedure for the trial of war-criminals has entirely failed. The list to be presented contains, it is said, over 800 names. We now return formally to a normal state of peace, and Lord Kilmarnock has actually left for Berlin as our diplomatic Chargé d'Affaires. A semi-official statement conveys the very proper decision that reputable German newspapers, or some of them, will now be permitted to send correspondents to London. The sooner the intellectual blockade comes to an end the better.

THE next three months, in which by the fixed timetable of the Treaty, blow after blow will fall on Germany, as she evacuates territory, surrenders the accused officers, reduces her army and begins to face some of the indemnity charges, will be critical and perhaps fatal for the present Republican régime. There are signs, meanwhile, that the first, though not perhaps the more serious, danger is likely to come, not from the Monarchist Right, but from the Socialist Left. German newspapers have not reached us for some days, and little can be gleaned from telegrams. There has been a railway strike, apparently local, on some of the railways in North-Western Germany. In Berlin itself the Independents arranged big

street demonstrations with processions to the Reichstag, to protest against the proposed emasculation of the Government's Works Council Bill.

* * *

THIS Bill in its original form set up a real and substantial instalment of the Socialist demand for democracy in industry. It made the creation of elective works' councils obligatory in every factory and workshop. These councils had large powers, including a right to be consulted before any employee could be dismissed. They were, moreover, to send representatives, with equal rights, to sit on the Board of Directors, and were to receive full statements of the financial conduct of the business. In short, the Bill meant a real partnership in industry. This has been whittled away in Committee, however, and the Socialist Left considers it no longer worth accepting. Hence the resolve to oppose it, and to demonstrate before the Reichstag. The new military police, with its armed cars and machine-guns, was used to shoot down the crowd, of whom on Tuesday 20 were killed and 40 wounded. Martial law has been proclaimed over the whole of North Germany, a step which seems to confirm the rumors that the Socialist Left was contemplating or had actually declared a general strike. We do not know whether this strike was to be a mere demonstration (the more probable alternative) or a serious attempt at revolutionary "direct action."

* * *

GENERAL PAGE CROFT has lost an old name and the Coalition has gained a new one. That would seem to be the immediate result of an article by Lord Birkenhead in the "Weekly Dispatch," attacking the Coalition, of which he is a leader, as an "invertebrate and undefined body," useless as an instrument for fighting our "English Communists," and, therefore, to be replaced by a single "National Party," "emerging with definite purposes and under one banner." The "definite purpose" was to fight Labor, apparently because it is Labor, and it is high time for the Class War to begin. This statesmanlike declaration, read in connection with Mr. Churchill's speech at Sunderland, is probably an intelligent and arranged anticipation of Mr. George's purpose. Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill are accustomed to act together, and Mr. George is frequently of the party. Thus, under the peculiar loyalties which government by Mr. Lloyd George fosters, a party can be destroyed by its chiefs even during their enjoyment of the offices and salaries which it confers. The Prime Minister probably concludes that neither Labor nor Liberalism has any use for him, and therefore that he must fall back on a unified Imperialist Party, discarding some Liberal "Coalies" and absorbing others. His tactics will doubtless be to try and take Labor at a disadvantage, and, if it assumes office, to give it a bad start. He will then make an alternative proposition, promising something to Democracy, and much more to the "interests." Divorced from the progressive parties, and at open war with Labor, his main basis will be Imperialism and Militarism. Not he, but Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill, will be the real heads of a revived Tory Party. They who pay the piper will call the tune, and that will be the old one, of which the world is sick.

THE Lord Chancellor's article has already produced a considerable shift in the balance of parties. Lord Robert Cecil, interviewed by the "Evening News," treated it with contempt, declaring that the new "National Party" had no policy, and that simply to oppose Labor was "idiotic." Party, said this honest and outspoken man, was not an end in itself, and if it were made one, that merely meant the desire to keep a set of politicians in office. His opposition therefore may be counted on, and also his closer affiliation with Labor, which, in the person of Mr. Henderson, already claims him as an ally. The Liberal position will also be subject to further definition. A respected member of the Independent Party has just died in Paisley, and if the local Association is willing, Mr. Asquith will claim succession to the seat as the head of this party, and in opposition to the Labor candidate. But if the Liberal chief again proposes himself for Parliament, it must be as a critic and opponent of the Government, on its foreign as well as its domestic policy. Taking, therefore, the disrupting effect of the Lord Chancellor's pronouncement, and the discredit thrown on the idea and structure of the Coalition, it is quite possible that the next few months will witness its complete dissolution and the advent of a new Government.

MEANWHILE, Lord Haldane has contributed to the re-distribution of political parts by proposing himself as the Mentor of Labor, and also a little as the Hammer of Liberalism. He said truly enough that Liberalism was of the spirit and not of the letter, but added that at present it was down in the plains, while Labor, with its idealism, had captured the heights. The Birmingham resolutions were old-fashioned "platitudes," attractive enough fifty or sixty years ago, but sadly out of date to-day. Nevertheless Lord Haldane urged a return to the "spirit" of Gladstone and Bright. This is a touching reversion, for we were under the impression that no man had done more than Lord Haldane to unseat these early gods of Liberalism. However, in spite of these slight inconsistencies, Lord Haldane should be useful in his new spiritual home, provided he abstains from furnishing it with the foreign policy of Liberal Imperialism.

THE news from Russia is now a monotonous chronicle of Red successes. Capturing immense quantities of Mr. Churchill's tanks, guns, and munitions, as they advance, they are gradually widening the wedge which they drove into Denikin's centre. He has now lost his chief bases, Rostoff and Taganzog, Odessa has also fallen, and no one expects that either of the two severed halves of his army can make a serious defence. Admiral Koltchak, meanwhile, has resigned his post as "Supreme Ruler," and placed himself under Allied protection. The American, Tchech, Polish, and Serbian contingents are evacuating Siberia. Only the half-breed Cossack, Semenoff, a mere brigand, keeps up the fight for the Tsarist tradition, with some Japanese support, and a legion of German prisoners. Meanwhile, a Social Revolutionary régime, which is prepared to come to terms with the Bolsheviks, is consolidating itself in Irkutsk and Eastern Siberia generally. The moral is well drawn in a long and able letter from a British Intelligence officer, lately returned from Siberia, in Wednesday's "Manchester Guardian." Koltchak had every facility for maintaining himself by force, money, arms, foreign troops, supplies, and he used force ruthlessly, burning villages, and decimating the inhabitants. But force breaks down for lack of moral in the armies which apply it. If the Bolsheviks, lacking all these external aids,

none the less triumph, the conclusion seems to be that their régime, with all its harshness, rests on something more than force and severity.

THE Poles have not yet perceptibly extended the aggressive movements which they began last week. We have little doubt, however, that they acted under Allied pressure. In a letter to the "New Statesman," General Gough, lately the head of our military mission in the Baltic States, boldly writes:—

"In spite of the disclaimers of various members of the Government, there is little doubt that Allied pressure has been exerted upon the Baltic States generally, and upon the Estonians in particular, to induce them to continue the war against the Bolsheviks."

He goes on to include Poland in this general statement, and refers to the official French threat of M. Berthelot, that if Esthonia makes peace, the Allies will take "suitable measures to guard against the danger." That is currently interpreted round the Baltic as a threat to blockade. The plight of Poland, hounded and even threatened into war, is suggested in the headlines with which the very moderate Warsaw Socialist daily, the "Rabotnik," reported the advance on Dvinsk—"Long live the War," "Famine in Dombrowa," "Unemployment in Warsaw," "Thousands dying from Typhus in Galicia," "Three cheers for War." None the less the "Times" in its leading article has the effrontery to suggest that Lenin is attacking Poland, as the Kaiser attacked Belgium. The fact is that the Reds have barely defended themselves on the Polish front, and have used all their best forces elsewhere. They have even tried to conciliate the Poles by sending back the art treasures and ancient books stolen by the Tsars from Warsaw; and beginning in February of last year, have made repeated overtures of peace to Poland, which the Poles under pressure from Paris have invariably rejected.

WHILE this attempt to drive the bankrupt and famine-stricken Borderland States into an ambitious campaign against Russia is in itself criminal, it is not the whole of the plot. The "Times" reveals part of it. If Poland is "attacked" by Lenin (as Belgium was by the Kaiser) the League of Nations must protect her. Thus the idea is plainly first to lure Poland into an attack which will cause her to be over-run, and then to use this pretext to enlist bigger forces than hers for her protection. What forces? Possibly those of the Western Powers, but not probably. The reserve force on which the conspirators are counting is that of Germany. There is of course a party in Germany which would be only too ready for this adventure: it would thus recover its army. A correspondent in our columns relates a German proposal which was made towards the close of 1918. With such plans Mr. Churchill may well have coquetted, and he seems still to entertain them. Why is Bermond's army, though under Allied control, still kept intact when it ought obviously to be disbanded?

MR. WILSON'S astonishing proposal that the merits of the Treaty and the Covenant should be made the issue at the next Presidential election has evidently alarmed his own party. Not even his admirers wish to face the electors on this issue, and the thought of delaying ratification and formal peace till March, 1921, is intolerable to everyone. The result is likely to be a stampede of Democratic Senators to accept the Lodge reservations substantially as they stand, if the few points in them which other Powers are bound to resist can be eliminated. What would happen next no one can foretell: the President, in Mr. Keynes's phrase, might "dig his toes in" and use his veto: or he might collapse.

Meanwhile, the panic reaction continues to rage. The New York State Legislature has reaffirmed its vote expelling its five Socialist members merely because they are Socialists. This method of making democracy safe for the world seems, however, to be shocking sane Americans, and there are also protests against the Administration's Sedition Bill, which imposes the death penalty for "radical" propaganda leading to loss of life. The only hope for the future seems to be that if the Republicans choose a reactionary candidate (General Wood, for example), the Democrats, bad as their recent record is, may be driven to select a Liberal.

* * *

AFTER a series of fresh negotiations, which threatened a chronic railway dispute, the delegate meeting of the N.U.R. decided suddenly on Thursday morning to accept the Government terms. This was a complete reversal of the policy of rejection, which held the field last week. The appeal to the Government secured no concession beyond a promise to confer small financial benefits in exceptional cases. The delegate meeting originally refused the terms on the ground that the sliding scale could not be accepted, and because the average instead of the highest wage in each grade had been taken as the basis of the standard wage for the existing abnormal conditions. The other objections really mattered very little. The Cabinet, fortified by the considered opinion of the Prime Minister and Mr. Bonar Law in Paris, decided unanimously that no alteration could be made in the general principles of the settlement they offered.

* * *

THE minor concessions made ensure that the higher paid men in a grade shall not lose financially by the working of the average, and bring within the scope of the 5s. increase on the war wage certain classes of workers, including women, who are not in the "conciliation" grades, to which the settlement, as a whole, alone applies. By comparison with the offer which led to the October strike, the terms now accepted are a substantial improvement, as Mr. Thomas claimed. The lower paid men in each grade will receive immediate increases, varying from 5s. to 11s. a week. The higher paid men in each grade are guaranteed their present ordinary wage, plus the old 33s. war wage. The sliding scale, which was proposed in the vaguest terms in the autumn, is now definitely limited in its downward scope, and provides for periodical advances if the cost of living goes on rising. Most of the opposition last week was due to the absurd secrecy with which the new offer was invested for two or three weeks. Once its solid advantages were understood and the pledge to deal with anomalies secured, Mr. Thomas's influence prevailed. Acceptance was given only by a narrow majority. But if the new scheme is administered in a considerate way, the opposition should disappear.

* * *

On the visit of the Labor delegation to Ireland, our Irish Correspondent writes:—

"The visit will be fruitful in the degree in which the delegates are free from misconceptions. Every courtesy will, no doubt, be extended to them, and the fullest opportunity given them of ascertaining the facts of the situation and the will of the people. The friendly attitude of Labor is generally recognized, and its social programme appeals strongly to our democratic country. But attitude is not equivalent to action, and sympathy with the Labor programme in England does not mean that anything in the nature of a political alliance is likely to be developed. The Irish people are definitely out of the British party arena, and will not seek guidance from any British party leaders. Labor has had less to do with bringing about the present tyranny in Ireland than any other party, but

we are not concerned to distinguish finely between the responsibility of different groups of Englishmen. Labor, organized or not, forms a majority of the British electorate, and to Irish eyes the British electorate is in the dock. Sinn Fein is accordingly more likely to seek explanation rather than counsel from the deputation. While freely recognizing that some of the staunchest foreign friends of Ireland are in the Labor Party, we have not failed to note certain ambiguities and reticences amongst their Parliamentary leaders. This visit will, we hope, supply them with reasons to clear up these ambiguities and fix them in the principles which must ground the Irish settlement it may be the duty of a Labor Government to undertake."

* * *

THE strike of agents employed by the Pearl Assurance Company is the most conspicuous sign of the revolt of the "black-coated proletariat" against economic conditions which are fast reducing them to the position of the poorest paid laborers before the war. The demand of the strikers is for a minimum wage of £3 a week. This is not a revolutionary proposal, but the Company pleads inability to pay this wage unless the staff is drastically curtailed. The Company has further taken up the indefensible position of refusing to recognize the National Amalgamated Union of Life Assurance Workers which organized the strike. The stoppage at first was only partial—not a surprising thing, in view of the special character of insurance collecting work—but with a growing public feeling against the Company, fostered by the vigorous help of the Workers' Union, the strikers have rapidly increased in number.

* * *

THE admitted facts are that under what is known as the "block book system" agents are allocated a certain number of "books" of the value of £10 or £12 a week. For collecting these sums they receive a fixed wage of £1 12s. 6d. and £2, and they are expected to add to their incomes by commission on new business. This system attracts part-time workers, semi-invalids, and men who run small shopkeeping businesses, and the full-time agents demand its abolition. The Company pays a dividend equal to 50 per cent. on the original share capital, and points to the inflated market value of the shares in justification. The strike and the disclosures which have been made during its progress raise once more the whole question of the commercial exploitation of this kind of insurance. It is clear that the system which absorbs one-sixth of premiums to meet the cost of collection alone is horribly costly for the policy-holders. Public interest in the matter is increased by the fact that National Health Insurance administration is mixed up with the private business of this and kindred insurance companies. The question is what proportion of the meagre wages of the agents is paid from the National Insurance management funds? The whole subject clearly calls for the scrutiny of the Government.

* * *

WE refer to the terrible attack on Miss Shore in one of the enclosed boxes which our railway companies are still allowed to foist on their customers and call railway carriages, in order to insist that in such a society as ours this danger to life should be brought to an end. We are afraid it must be confessed that the war has barbarized a great many young men here as elsewhere. Murderous assaults, mostly with robbery as their end, are far too common. They are an ugly (and inevitable) evil, which criminologists foresaw as the fruit of five years of wholesale homicide, and only time can heal it. But at least travellers have a right to demand protection. Isolated railway carriages are at all times a stupid and unseemly anachronism. In these days they are a public peril.

Politics and Affairs.

THE TRUE TASK OF LABOR.

WE should not ourselves have said with the Lord Chancellor that the Coalition is in such evil case that nothing remains for it but suicide; but he knows best, and we may therefore look for the early demise of this "invertebrate and undefined body." Our concern is rather lest the "invertebrate" breed the "invertebrate"; and the country be finally left a victim to ineradicable bonelessness. This indeed would appear to be the purpose of Nature with Britain, for so far as Lord Birkenhead understands it or interprets it correctly, the Coalition, in dying, will give birth to the "National Party," which will provide the country with an effective instrument for fighting "Communism." Lord Robert Cecil, commenting with some scorn on this announcement, remarks that the new party appears to be unprovided with a policy, on Ireland, on industry, on finance, or on foreign affairs, and that its point of view is "idiotic." As far as we are aware, no one disputes either Lord Robert's description of the new Coalition, or Lord Birkenhead's characterization of the old. New or old, there will be little more than a stolen name to choose between them. The harlequinade will go on as before, a little robbed, like other after-Christmas entertainments, of its earlier *éclat*. Clown and Pantaloon may swop parts, but it is hoped that the ever-fascinating Columbine will consent to retain her place in the cast. We do not doubt that such a Government can go on a little longer. The men who began the ruin of Europe should prove fully equal to the task of consummating it, and indeed they already propose a short cut to that end. It is part of the arrogance of a ruling class to imagine that it alone can govern. This is the theory of the "National Party." It treats the Labor Party as its only rival, dismisses it as incompetent, and, regarding the Great War as a convenient curtain-raiser to the Class War, sets the British workman in the firing-line lately occupied by the Hun.

The idea of a National Party is an old device of politicians without principles; and as the nation awakes to broader and finer conceptions of public life it will, we think, perceive the mischief of setting aside the whole reform movement in Britain and treating the country as a kind of Russia, with the citizens already divided and embattled as Whites and Reds. Where is the British Communism on which Lord Birkenhead declares war? If it exists, the Government creates most of it. There are strikes; but they are the oldest weapon of the old Trade Unionism, and they represent, in the main, the effort of the working-people to overtake the attack which high prices make on their pre-war standard of living. It is certain that in some neglected classes (including the smaller middle folk) the damage has never been repaired; if, with others, it has been cancelled, and Labor has added a little to its comfort and purchasing power, it has thereby increased the security of the State.

The Lord Chancellor's challenge to it therefore is an aggressive act of political reaction. For so far as Labor is something above and beyond a "wages and hours party," it is essentially an instrument of European reconstruction. Mr. Myers, for example, the victor in Spen Valley, stated that he had all along favored peace by negotiation, and that he desired a complete break with Imperialism. The rule of such a

Labor Party far transcends the instinctive effort of the workmen to retrieve the losses of the war and counteract the depreciation of the currency. In the existing state of politics it stands for the only true Peace Party left in Europe. Its mission, therefore, is moral and redemptive as well as economic. The world is not merely in a state of division; it exhibits a distraction of soul which at times seems to prelude the complete loss of its moral energy. But Labor is a force of union and of reconciliation. Even in the act of coming into power, it will have established, in every one of the neutral and belligerent States, a brotherhood of European thinkers and workers, united on the broad ground of peace, free trade, disarmament, and the revival of concord. Through the ideas and endeavors of these men will arise those forces of sympathy, "instruction," and "imagination" on which Mr. Keynes relies for the salvation of Europe. Can it be denied that the case for this moral transformation is urgent and even desperate? When a British general,* lately in charge of a British Military Mission, defines the policy of the Entente as that of forcing States on the brink of starvation into absolute ruin, when little Power after little Power is deliberately drawn by men like Mr. Churchill into the net of their polity, when one conception of force arises to counteract and destroy another, it is clear that only a dramatic change of purpose and direction in government can bring about the necessary moral reaction. Take the case of Germany. There is little reasonable doubt that in the rebound from the injustice and cruelty of the Treaty she is being rapidly re-militarized. Is it so certain that this process is disagreeable to "statesmen" of the type of Mr. Churchill? A re-militarized Germany makes a convenient hammer of Bolshevism. Germany was at least allowed to form and recruit her anti-Bolshevist levies in the Baltic provinces. The Entente looked on while these troops were being organized and despatched. Did they also sympathize with the process, or even passively assist it? If Bolshevism is to be uprooted by force of arms, why not use the arm that is nearest and best equipped for the work? It is evident that in obedience to this political conception there is even now preparing an internecine conflict of unparalleled magnitude, the child and the avenger of the Great War.

Happily there is a countering agent. Little attention is being paid to neutral Europe, and to the growth of the popular demand for disarmament in Holland and the Scandinavian countries. But it exists, and it is already affecting the course of their politics. In the face of an armed Entente, the neutral Powers are on the eve of an heroic resolution to disarm. In Holland both the Ministers for War and for the Navy have resigned, and their estimates will in any case be greatly cut down. Sweden finds it impossible to fill the *cadres* of her regiments, and the new establishments are much below strength. If Germany, again, is to raise a great volunteer army, it can only be on the ruin of the existing Government and the destruction of German Socialism. But the key to this problem of world-government lies with us. The war has already started us on a new career of Empire, which by virtue of the resistance it will meet within and without our dominions, will have to rest on a great military force as well as on a dominant Navy. Only one power can stay this otherwise ruinous development of neo-Imperialism. We would not belittle the influence of the Liberal Party, if only Liberalism, recalling its earlier ideals would begin to think of Europe in terms of mutual sustenance and progress. But we confess to the

* "Possibly the greatest ovation accorded me during the whole course of the election was when a question was put, 'Were you in favor of peace by negotiation?' I promptly replied, 'Yes, and I believe that if peace had been secured by negotiation, we should have got a far better peace than we have at the present moment.'"—Mr. Myers in the "Labour Leader," on the Spen Valley Election.

* See General Gough's letter in the "New Statesman."

view that there is more root-work to be done than Liberalism can compass. A new party is rapidly arising, armed with a mandate from the great populations that have grown up under the industrial order, and called by them to end the reign of force in Europe, and to convey that message to the War Offices and Admiralties of London, Paris, Rome, Washington, and Berlin. Such a party, it is said, will provoke a revolt in the Civil Services. On the contrary, we believe that it will command a Civil Service of its own, as loyal as was its predecessor to the older statesmanship, and not less able. It is the fashion to argue that such a formation is impossible, that it must lack middle-class brains and experience, that it is merely a new and petty form of class government, that it is one thing to rule a trade union and quite another to run an Empire, that the followers will not obey their leaders, nor the leaders discipline their followers. These are criticisms to which a new party, standing in a measure for a new social order, is liable, and to some of them it should give due heed. But let the defects of the Labor Party be what they may, they will not reconcile the country to the shameless opportunists who now mishandle it. We believe, on the contrary, that an alternative to so bad a Government as that of Mr. Lloyd George exists, and that if men of faith and intellect rally to it in sufficient strength, it can yet transform Europe.

THE COMING OF PEACE.

It has not often happened in history that a Treaty has become morally moribund in the interval between its signature and its ratification. That is the fate of the Treaty of Versailles. The ceremony of last Saturday stirred no flicker in the dead embers of our war-passions, and most of us, when we read the news, wondered only whether months must pass or years, before this monstrous settlement is revised. It is a gain, however, to return, however imperfectly, to the legal footing of peace. It is no small thing that direct diplomatic relations with our late enemies should be resumed. Up to the present M. Clemenceau has spoken in the name of the whole Alliance across barbed wire to German plenipotentiaries, who could answer only in writing. In Berlin our only representatives have been soldiers. Henceforward the British and German Foreign Offices will be in direct touch, and our national personality will no longer be sunk in the composite figure of the Alliance—a figure whose features and accent were unmistakably French. Personal intercourse of a less official kind will, we hope, follow, and there ought to be no delay in permitting the German press to send correspondents to London. The Socialist and the Liberal organs of Berlin and Frankfurt have in the main a creditable record, and their representatives deserve a courteous welcome. An intellectual boycott would be a sin against civilization second only to prolongation of the blockade. We are glad to see that the Board of Trade has issued a circular strongly advising the resumption of trade with Germany. Few Coalition candidates would have dared to predict, still less to defend, such a circular a year ago. Its publication marks a healthy fall in the nation's temperature to a nearly normal level. One ventures to hope that when Parliament reassembles we shall hear no more of the restrictions of the Aliens Bill which the Lords defeated, or of the various embargoes which Lord Sankey's judgment has upset. Germany has very little to export, and still less ability to buy. There will be none of that flood of "dumped" goods which Protectionists affected to fear.

For any considerable and mutually beneficial resumption of trade, we shall have to wait until by some means an international loan permits Central Europe to provide its industries with raw materials and to restore its currency. In the meanwhile let us see that no needless artificial barriers are raised. The Peace Treaty accords to Germany none of the normal reciprocal rights of residence or trade customary between civilized peoples. She was forced, while herself granting the most ample and even onerous privileges to foreigners, to abandon most of the privileges of intercourse which habitually obtain between members of the European family. There is, we believe, no disposition on the part of our Foreign Office to take advantage of her almost outlawed status. Relations will tend to become normal as the months go by, and we hope that the first meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations will vote her admission to its ranks.

It is currently assumed that, while the Treaty itself must certainly be revised, the position which it has created is stable, at least for some months to come. It is, on the contrary, the next three months which are critical, and until they are over it would be rash to assume that the Parliamentary Republic can survive the shocks which the Supreme Four have devised for it, by way of making democracy secure. The German people has now had eight months in which to read and re-read the articles of the Treaty. It is one thing to read one's fate in print, and quite another to feel the blows descend upon one's head. They are timed according to an inexorable programme. During the first month the German armies and officials must evacuate Schleswig, Danzig, West Prussia, and the *plébiscite* areas of East Prussia. On February 10th the accused "war-criminals" must be handed over for trial by Allied Courts-Martial. On March 10th the standing army must be halved, and there follows a vast surrender of ships, warships, fishing boats, gold, specie, and other valuables. On April 10th we reach the date on which the terms are to be disclosed for the payment of part of the indemnity amounting to five thousand millions sterling. It would have been hard for an expert psychologist to devise a scheme more nicely calculated to drive a people to reckless despair. The moment the patient has begun to recover consciousness after one stunning blow, the hammer descends again. Bitter as the past year has been, the next three months will be infinitely harder to live through.

The chief risk, as we have often pointed out, comes from the demand for the surrender of the war-criminals. In 1914 we were all outraged when Austria demanded from Serbia, not the surrender to Austrian courts of persons said to be implicated in the Serajevo murders, but the presence of an Austrian assessor on the Serbian Tribunals which were to try these minor and more or less disreputable conspirators. We all said, officially and unofficially, that this was a claim incompatible with the dignity and independence of Serbia. Five years have passed, and we demand the surrender to Allied Courts-Martial not of a few shady conspirators, but of 800 officers who presumably include some of the proudest names in Germany, men who led their soldiers to victory and earned the gratitude which all peoples pay to capable, even if harsh, leaders. The Germans beg us to accept as a substitute the procedure which in 1914 we thought too humiliating for Serbia—the participation of Allied officials in German Tribunals. We have rejected that compromise and insisted on the full rigor of our demand.

To our thinking the demand is wrong in itself. If we wish to convince the German people that their leaders conducted the war by uncivilized means, we must produce full evidence, given in their hearing, before a court which

inspires their confidence. Our chosen procedure defeats its own end. The Germans will hear little of the evidence, and the sentences pronounced by enemy judges will not seem to them, and can hardly be, impartial. We find it, moreover, revolting to try subordinate officers for executing orders which they would have been shot for disobeying. The other alternative of punishing responsible leaders like Ludendorff and von Tirpitz would seem to history like a vengeance on men whose real crime was that they were formidable antagonists. Apart, however, from these considerations, the procedure which we have chosen exposes the new Republican Government which Mr. Churchill eulogized the other day as "practical" and "democratic," to a humiliation which it will only by a miracle survive. On what force can this Government rely to arrest the eight hundred? Only on their fellow-officers and men. They are already disaffected, and half of them will be looking forward to their own dismissal and their reduction to the unemployed ranks within another month. It is hard to imagine ourselves in such a case (we have never known a real defeat), but under no circumstances can we conceive the British Army and Navy allowing and assisting the surrender of British officers to be tried by the victors. Our own Foreign Office is obviously aware of the risk, and it was even announced that it had reduced the French list from 1,200 to 300. Mr. George, once in Paris, has yielded, as usual. But whether the total be 300 or 800 makes little difference. It will not surprise us if this vindictive act should upset the present *régime*, and plunge Germany into an open class war between the military caste and the Socialists. If the spring of national feeling is too much strained for such a prompt reaction, the wound to what is, after all, a natural pride will only bite the deeper.

The consequences of this Peace will work themselves out by the laws of moral causation; it is too late for protest and too early for revision. Meanwhile the Supreme Four are completing their work by the dismemberment of Turkey. It will be their masterpiece of Imperialism, and one hardly knows whether to pity more the populations who lose all hope of self-government, or the soldiers, mostly conscripts, who for decades to come will have to hold them down. Whatever the details may be, the effect on the Mohammedan world will be deep and lasting, and if we wished to prepare it for Bolshevik propaganda, we could hardly have gone more skilfully to work. For our part we certainly should have wished to see far-reaching measures to end Turkish misrule. The imposition of a reform scheme under the control of the League of Nations should have been the first step. The natural line of reform for mixed Oriental communities is not, however, partition or even territorial Home Rule, but rather the extension and development of cultural autonomy, for each racial and religious unit. Instead of this we are to have a purely Imperialist partition. Had Turkey survived without the loss of the immense territories which the Allies are dividing among themselves, we should have urged nothing against the expulsion of the Turkish Government from Europe. Constantinople, of all cities the most cosmopolitan, with its fabulously beautiful site, its Imperial tradition and its strategical centrality, was destined by nature and history to be the capital of a world-federation. We urged long ago, as Mr. Buchan and others suggest this week in the "Times," that it ought to be the seat of the League of Nations. The religious question is embarrassing. Though Constantinople is not a Moslem holy city, it did give prestige to the Ottoman Caliphate. That in any case is gone, since an "independent" Arab king holds the sacred cities of Arabia and guards the pilgrimage. Whatever happens, the shock to Moslem sentiment

remains, for the last Islamic Empire is gone. A shadowy survival under Allied guardianship will not do much to placate Moslem feeling. Indeed, when the French argue that at Constantinople the Turks can be more easily controlled than at Broussa or Konia, we ask ourselves if their policy of retaining the Turks in Stamboul is really more merciful than the British policy of evicting them? The argument that a Turkish Army is needed to balance the ascendancy of the British Navy in the Straits is not calculated to reassure us. France, if the "Temps" voices her policy, seems indeed to aim at inheriting German influence in Turkey, and at adding one more satellite army to her European military system. Neither solution in these conditions promises a tranquil East. A jungle of wrongs and resentments stretches from Rhine to Ganges. The first step to clearing it will be to emerge from the politics of the Alliance into the politics of the League, and Labor alone is capable of leading the way.

"MANDATES" IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

SENECA's melancholy reflection that a great fortune is a great servitude, hard to win and harder still to guard, is truer of Empire than of any other form of property. Who could give an exhaustive catalogue of the consequences to our own freedom of action in every part of the world that have followed from our possession of India? For us and for every European Power there is no more vital question than the question whether this servitude is to be increased or relaxed, whether the resettlement of the Turkish Empire is to take a form which will diminish or aggravate the diplomatic complications and the political entanglements of the Middle East. It is a poor look out for the world if we are going to substitute another set of rivalries for the old, and to inflame all the racial and religious antagonism that have caused such mischief in the past. Yet this is the prospect that is opening up before our eyes at this moment. Unless we can persuade our rulers to learn at the eleventh hour, we shall have more to guard than ever after the Peace, and the forces against which we shall have to guard those possessions will be more dangerous and active than the forces that threatened our peace in the past. This will apply to all the Powers that take a share of the plunder. The war which was to have made the world freer will end in putting it under a more desperate servitude. The very exhaustion of Europe will embitter the quarrels of the Powers over great sources of wealth, and the growth and expansion of a political self-consciousness in the Arab populations will be regarded as an argument for a sterner and more inflexible administration. Europe will be caught more inexorably than ever in the old vicious circle.

The grave news from Syria is a warning not to one Power but to all the Powers, for it is a warning against the spirit in which all the Powers have been looking at this question. What kind of outlook is there for peace in Syria if France tries to impose a settlement that is unwelcome to the population? We know what is involved in a state of settled tension in a case like this; it means not merely a permanent struggle between rulers and ruled but a permanent temptation to intrigue among all the Powers. The history of Egypt is a significant illustration of the poison that spreads from such a source over the diplomatic system of Europe. We are in danger now of reproducing over a much wider area, inhabited by much more combative peoples, all the evils from which the world has suffered in that case. Persia, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia—everywhere there will be friction between

East and West, with its accompaniments of intermittent and epidemic panic and vengeance, and the continual and restless play of intrigue and ambition among the great Powers. We shall soon reach a state of things for which the most Bismarckian Prussian schemer would not have dared to hope. The one Power of which the populations of the Middle East will have no bitter memories will be the Power that is excluded from any share in this fatal prize, the one Power that will not be called on to take any of the fierce measures that are associated with the maintenance of order in large and scattered territories where the ruling garrison is small. No German airman will have the chance of dropping bombs on an Arab village. And as for the Bolshevik danger, could the most ardent Bolshevik propagandist hope for a more promising field for his exertions?

The League of Nations should of course provide the way of escape from this danger. For the League should be the means of revolutionizing the relations of Europe with the East, of getting rid of this false system of mixed guardianship and possession. In other words it should be the means of carrying the East forward to self-government. This is a consummation to which we Englishmen should look with special interest and hope, as a noble climax to our national history in the East. Our relations with India began in the ordinary way of buccaneering and exploitation. But at a comparatively early stage these primitive passions were in part subordinated to higher and more responsible considerations. There is a great deal of sheer selfishness and ambition in the history of our Indian Empire, and the Englishman who would justify everything done in our name a century ago or even yesterday is at heart a Prussian. But no serious critic of our rule would contend that we have never sought anything beyond our own aggrandisement or that we have been indifferent to the fate of the peoples we have ruled. The Englishman who is proud of our achievements and who is anxious that our fortunes shall be associated with the progress of the world, and not be a burden on its back, will look forward to the day when India will become an independent member of the League, having been trained for that independence in the school of the British Empire. What prouder title could we boast than this, that having begun in the old spirit of loot and plunder, we had by generations of self-discipline so improved and developed the spirit of just and honest administration in India that we have enabled her peoples to take their place in this new world, in which the League of Nations provides the guarantee against aggression and so makes possible a peaceful and orderly progress at home? It is with such an ultimate ideal before our eyes that we should judge to-day all schemes for Indian political growth and all methods for keeping order. Above all we must avoid like poison the fatal doctrine that the life of an Indian counts for less than the life of an Englishman, for that is a basis on which you build not the kind of society for which we profess to be preparing India, but the kind of society in which a foreign ruler takes over the traditions of an Oriental despot.

Can the method of the mandatory system, the handing over of territory to different European Powers to administer under the League, secure the end we desire in the case of Syria and Mesopotamia? It is very doubtful. At the best it would only be possible if the terms of the mandates were drawn up so strictly as to exclude any shadow of national advantage, if the arrangements for trading and the development of natural resources were made quite free and impartial, and if the political conditions were so arranged as to give the mandatory Power no kind of hold on the political future. Is this possible

under any conditions? Is it possible under the conditions under which we are setting to work? In this relation Great Britain is perhaps the most important of all the Powers, and our Government has just made a Treaty with a weak Oriental Government which is in violation of all these principles. We are represented on the Council of the League by the statesmen who arranged that Treaty. With what face could the authors of the Persian Treaty demand of any other Government that it should confine itself in its relations with a local Government to a disinterested and unselfish assistance? In the present state of European politics, it seems unreasonable to look for any solution on the mandatory principle which will not contain all the elements of trouble and danger for the future. But why should not the League help in these cases directly rather than by the agency of particular Powers? There will be in any case some sort of indigenous Government set up for Syria and Mesopotamia. Why should not these Governments be enabled to take advisers of their own and to receive from the League the general help that they are to receive from France or Great Britain? There are obvious difficulties, but are they greater than the difficulties under the alternative system? By this means we escape the chief danger, the danger of setting up any European Power in a position of antagonism to native ambitions, creating new vested interests, which means a new servitude for the West as much as for the East. Could not the statesmen of the League work out a system on these lines for giving expert guidance and financial help? If such a system were adopted, it would obviously be our duty to revise the Persian Treaty in accordance with these principles, and to make Persia a leading example of the new method rather than a cynical illustration of the old.

A RACE BETWEEN WAGES AND PRICES.

HISTORY tells us that there is no more certain source of social misery and discontent than a debasement of the coinage. But the debasement of a metallic coinage is child's play to the depreciation of inconvertible paper currency. We have had the examples of Germany, Austria and Russia before us all the year. But Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues have been too much absorbed in imperialistic adventures, and in the war with Russia, to spare either money or brains for the restoration of honest money. Consequently our paper pounds have been steadily depreciating; which is another way of saying that prices have been rapidly rising. How rapidly, the housewife is well aware.

It would require a very large and very careful selection of household budgets to arrive at anything like a fair average of the depreciation of the currency which has occurred since the outbreak of war or since the armistice. But a very good measure is provided by the index number of the "Economist" which is now available for the whole period from July, 1914, to December, 1919. The index figure of 2,200 is the basis, and represents the average prices of a large number of commodities for the period of 1901 to 1905. This figure had risen at the end of July, 1914, to 2,565, and by December in the same year it was 2,800. In December, 1915, it had risen to 3,634; in December, 1916 (when the Knock-Out-Blow Government was formed) to 4,908; in December, 1917, to 5,845; in December, 1918, to 6,094, a comparatively small increase owing partly to the anticipatory decline which occurred after the armistice. The lowest point reached in connection with peace anticipations was in

March, 1919, when the index number was 5,708; and, about that time, it may be remembered Mr. Lloyd George was rash enough to promise the working classes a substantial reduction in the cost of living, although the Board of Trade was busily promoting high prices by means of embargoes and monopoly licences, and though borrowing and inflation were continued for the purpose of financing Mr. Churchill's war against Lenin and Trotsky. Unfortunately for Mr. Lloyd George and for the people of the United Kingdom, prices, instead of responding to the commands of the Welsh Wizard, began to move upwards, and passed the 6,000 limit in June. By the end of November the figure was nearly 7,000, and by the end of December another great leap had occurred to 7,364. If we reduce the average to a percentage starting on the basis of 100, prices in July, 1914, are represented by the figure 116, which had risen to 277 in December, 1918, and to 334 at the end of last month. If this rise continues a little longer, prices will be three times as high as they were at the outbreak of war, and the purchasing power of the paper pound will be only six shillings and eightpence in terms of the old gold sovereign.

It would be easy, of course, to show in detail how particular prices have soared in advance of others. In some cases there has been a great deal of profiteering through monopoly values engineered by the Board of Trade's embargoes. Mr. Justice Sankey's recent judgment has declared all these embargoes to be illegal; but nevertheless numerous restrictions remain which are, of course, utilized to raise prices.

Can we be surprised at the discontent? No doubt some of the more powerful Trade Unions have been able to secure compensation, and in some trades paper wages have risen even more than paper prices. But the position of the middle classes and of people with small fixed incomes is deplorable. Their mute sufferings and severe privations are not recorded in the newspapers. They cannot stop the trains or the supply of coal, and they are lucky if they are not hauled before a tribunal for trying to make both ends meet by "profiteering." It is curious that neither the Independent Liberals nor the Labor Party have taken the trouble to work out a policy for bringing about a reduction of prices. The Trade Unions of course find it simpler to press for an increase of wages. But what the community as a whole needs is a restoration of honest money and market prices, neither of which is likely to be achieved under the existing régime of militarism, inflation, and waste.

A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

MR. ASQUITH'S willingness to contest Paisley, if Liberal Paisley asks him, is, no doubt, an event. Naturally it cannot be forced. Liberalism, like Labor, works through local organs, there is said to be at least one Coats in the field, and it will be for the Paisley Association, somewhat divided between "Frees" and "Coalies," to say whether it wants its old leader back. Probably the Coalition, badly bitten in the Spen Valley, will be shy of a second wound, and hearing that all parties wish to see Mr. Asquith return to the Commons, will leave Liberal Paisley alone. But if the Asquith candidature goes through, it must carry something weightier than a compliment to a distinguished man.

Mr. Asquith will be expected to break the long Liberal silence on the peace. There were formal reasons for not ending it earlier. They came to an end with the ratification, and Mr. Asquith, as a chief party to the war, may have felt that he was committed to reserve. But for the peace he had no kind of responsibility. The case for it is already shattered; and when Lord Robert Cecil, who was more involved than Mr. Asquith, openly pronounces for revision there is no reason why the Liberal leader should be dumb. Therefore, as I say, the Paisley candidature must re-open criticism on the peace. Many hope that it will go further and make a vigorous attempt to close the putrefying wound which poisons Central and Eastern Europe.

BUT even so, is an Asquith candidature wise? It will probably ensure a straight fight between Liberalism and Labor. But that is precisely what neither party desires. Both recognize that sooner or later there must be an arrangement. Labor is obviously the stronger party. But even Spen Valley shows that it is not likely to win a convincing victory, if, while conducting its real battle with the Coalition, it fights a minor engagement with Liberalism on its flank. For the moment it seems to be agreed that this half-real encounter must go on. Liberalism will not surrender its seat, nor Labor its reversionary claim to Liberalism. But Liberalism, equipped with a definite foreign policy, more or less identical with Labor's, is a different proposition from the almost bodiless and wholly soulless thing which escaped from the massacre of 1918. That step taken, the leaders can begin to talk. If the talk "eventuates," the rope is round the neck of the Coalition, if, indeed, so "invertebrate" a thing can be said to have a neck at all.

OH, these "National Parties!" Have I not in my brief life known at least four-and-twenty of them? The recipe for the mixture varies a little, but the ingredients are usually the same. Take a body of men with no principles whatever, but a keen appetite for office, add a handful of blunders, season with disloyalty and serve with general confusion, and this unsatisfying dish can always be turned out to fill the bellies of fools. About such a Government one never inquires concerning its policy. Curiosity limits itself to inquiring what its next "stunt" will be, and when it comes, what new shift of personalities, or what fresh-looking party lure, it portends. Nothing more. For example, does the Lord Chancellor appear in the "Weekly Dispatch" (what a medium!) as the Prime Minister's rival, or merely as his courier in advance? Will Mr. George, having lost Labor and Liberalism and the respectable Tories, betake himself to the less respectable ones? Or will he eventually serve with Labor, if he fails to dish it? When will the next election be? As soon as Labor can be caught in the toils of a big strike, or forced into office before it is ready, or done something to or with that will damage and disable it, or (in the reverse contingency) induce it to take to its bosom the only Democrat of Downing Street? This is no fancy sketch; it is the customary criticism of Ministerial ways, and there is no other.

I SUPPOSE—but only suppose—that the Smith-Churchill party have been instructed to force the pace

for Denikinism, and that there or thereabouts (till something else turns up) Mr. George will pitch his roving tent for a while. The Left has edged away from him; so he in turn edges to the Right. I suppose there never was a worse time for such a movement; Lord Robert Cecil's caustic comment is that of every man with an eye on the weather-gauge of Europe. Nevertheless, the *coup* has done good. It has certainly strengthened the case for a Labor-democratic Government. The Labor men have replied with spirit and dignity, and their sensible retort contrasts well with the intellectual cheapness of the challenge. If the Coalition is really such a wretched, boneless thing, is it likely to give birth to anything better? And failing a third Coalition, would it not be wise to prepare a good and strong alternative? It is surprising how universally this view is held, and how many men of opposite temperaments and opinions it attracts.

I SUPPOSE we must reconcile ourselves to the trial of the German officers, with the feeling that never was there a more wanton aggravation of the necessary evil of war. I believe all the opinion that counts to be fixed against an act which, with the affectation of justice and policy, has its root in all that is unjust and impolitic. Why could not our rulers have been better advised? I believe that Botha, as good and wise a man as the Conference contained, was against the surrender of the officers, and gave his reasons with his accustomed frankness. No country, he said, ought to make such a demand, and no country could in honor concede it. The same pressure was, in fact, applied to the Boers, and after having been resisted by them for the best part of the war (which it prolonged) was dropped and never heard of again. And how is it possible to defend a procedure under which the men who ordered the worst things that were done in the war—*e.g.* Ludendorff in the case of the Belgian deportations—are let off, and the men who obeyed their orders under pain of death if they resisted them, are made amenable to these partizan courts? Now that all the world knows the difficulties of the German Government and the growing power of the military party, this useless, vindictive course is urged against them. The "trial of the Kaiser" is of much less consequence, for I imagine every effort will be made to frame the demand for his extradition in such a way as to give the Dutch Government the best possible excuse for refusing it. One applauds this bit of wisdom, without seeing a possible way of applying it to the much more serious case of the officers.

"We shall dig ourselves in in our present lines," writes a Sinn Feiner of the Right wing to me, and now that we approach the central strategy of the Republicans, which has always been the capture of Irish local government, we shall see what head the coercive system can make against a country's refusal to be governed save by its own people and their nominees. The gas-and-water revolt may be more difficult to deal with than the national resistance, for it is more diffused and more intangible. But Sinn Fein, too, has its grave difficulties. The assassinations may continue, and Sinn Fein knows that they are a stain on its escutcheon, and yet that it may not be able to stop them. Undoubtedly the old Irish trouble has reverted; the secret society working within the open, the idealist, revolt, and keeping its ugly secrets and their agents to itself. So the tragedy of England and Ireland and their ill-starred union goes on.

I HAVE KNOWN many kinds of "Times," but never quite such a "Times" as now lords it in Printing House Square. In the main it is a highly original mixture of reactionary fanaticism abroad and open-minded democracy at home. The two streams never meet, and flow on side by side in placid disunion. The Russian Bourbon never shakes hands with the British Bolshevik, even though he occupies the next column to him; is never incommoded by his presence; is never rude to him, and in return, never suffers rebuke at his hands. But I am bound to add that the first gentleman "carries on" in a way I had thought to be impossible, even in a British newspaper of the new propagandist type. Anything is good enough as food for his anti-Bolshevism. So the "Times" lives in a perpetual flutter. Curates preach, ladies scream, gossips prattle, and the air is thick with showers of atrocities. Logic, reason, history, even the most elementary acts of reason, are ignored. Nor is any form of self-contradiction absent from this picture of mental confusion. In one column the "Times" glories in the Polish attack on Soviet Russia, and its open sustenance by the Allies. In the next it cries out (without a fact in support) that Lenin has marked out Poland for his next prey, and that the Entente must rush in to save the innocent victim of his fury. What a paper! And what a home for fanaticism to lodge in!

I HOPE I may make a second appeal on behalf of the Vienna Emergency Fund. It has done extremely well. Over £60,000 has been collected; and as the Government gives £1 for £1, this means that £120,000 is already secured for the relief of the terrible want of Vienna. But the need is not sensibly diminished. Nothing short of a loan can save Austria from starvation this winter, and though I believe the Government to be both sympathetic and extremely anxious, a loan can hardly be negotiated without America's aid. That, again, is a slow and difficult matter. "Unless America comes in in a week, Austria may be starving within a month," said an authority the other day. Meantime, hard is the lot of these thousands of famished children, and shivering, half-fed women and children, innocent victims of the storm that has uprooted their pleasant home. £20,000 has already been sent to Sir Thomas Cunningham, and stores of cod-liver oil, condensed milk, and other absolute necessities. But much more is wanted. The means of providing it should be sent to the Treasurer at 12, Tokenhouse Yard, E.C.

A RECENT visitor to the Pope gave me an interesting sketch of his appearance and personality. Physically he seemed tired. But he was alert on points of detail, and extremely well-informed as to the state of Europe and of the hapless folk in whose sad case the appeal to his sympathies had been made. His chief anxiety was that, so far as the Churches were concerned, the appeal for relief should be made and conducted by Catholics and Protestants together, and that at all costs this religious *entente* should be preserved. His second suggestion was that the Socialists should be associated with it. His language throughout was liberal to a degree, and also full of feeling. My friend added an account of a singularly gracious act by the fifteen or so Socialist Mayors in Northern Italy. All of them, in the name of their municipalities, had arranged to take over and feed from 1,000 to 1,500 starving Austrian children.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

"TO THE CITY."

MANY and various have been the titles applied to kings, potentates and rulers—"The Fair," "The Bold," "The Scholar," "The Saint," "Solomon," "The Martyr," "Lackland," "The Short," "The Conqueror," "The Unready," "The Bulgar-Slayer," "Longshanks," "Supra Grammaticam," "Lion Heart," "The Red," "The Hunchback," "The Gallant," "The Peace-Maker," "The Splendor of the World," "The Good," "The Fat." In the popular choice of title, bodily defect, moral excellence, and glory seem strangely mingled, and we may hope that the one was as much exaggerated as the others. But to a few the special title of "The Great" has become attached, as though there was nothing more particular to be said about them. Of course, they have all been conquerors, for when nations are fighting for their lives or other people's property, the victor is naturally the greatest of men. But those who have won the title by universal consent have, we think, always displayed a further side to their character—a more definitely intellectual side—than the mere victorious soldier. It is true that Caesar and Napoleon, the two rulers greatest in victory and intellect alike, have not generally been known as "The Great." But we have Alexander, the pupil of Aristotle and the poet among adventurers; Pompey, the sensitive gentleman; Alfred, the educationalist; Charlemagne, the idealist of Europe; Peter, the shipwright; Frederick, the flute-player and friend of Voltaire. And besides there is Constantine, whose city lies this week for the third time in the balance of fate.

Constantine deserved the title for many reasons. Perhaps he won it by accepting Christianity as the State religion—a dubious advantage to Christianity. But above all other possible claims stands his genius in selecting the old Megarian town of Byzantium as the "New Rome," the second capital of the world. His predecessor, Diocletian, was also a great and imaginative statesman. Before he retired into his enormous palace at Spalato, and, amid the serenity of his cabbage gardens, bade farewell to a world which appeared to be disintegrating under the subtle encroachments of Christianity, he also had perceived the necessity of ordaining a second capital for the Empire he had temporarily saved. But he missed his chance. He had his eye fixed on Nicomedia, which commanded nothing, and was the gate to nowhere. With the glance of genius, Constantine perceived that Byzantium commanded the Middle East, and was the gate between two worlds. Perhaps he realized that the Empire had pretty nearly reached its limits, and that henceforward the Imperial task would rather be to guard than to extend the civilization of Europe.

As an Imperial fortress to restrain the incursions of barbaric herds, whether from Persia or Central Asia or the northern steppes, his city possessed a site of unequalled strength. The salt-water rivers of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, with streams always flowing rapidly in one direction, defended the entrance to the deep and placid harbor, as impregnable mountain passes might defend a lofty citadel. The narrow land-front of the whole peninsula, from the Black Sea to the Marmora, was easily to be fortified with walls and dikes. Still more easily the small and hilly promontory on which the city was to stand, between the Golden Horn and the sea—that famous promontory which Theodosius defended a century later by the lines of walls and series of towers that preserved the city for a thousand years, and still divide it from the desolation of the Turkish cemeteries. Land and sea combined to provide a site of almost unsurpassed security, as on land the Bulgars of seven years ago discovered, and we ourselves lately discovered on land and sea. As the natural gateway between East and West the situation was equally advantageous. Through this gate the trade routes to Trebizond and

Colchis, to the Caspian, to Persia, and India inevitably passed, and across the Bosphorus lay the roads to many of the brightest cities of Asia Minor. When we try to realize what the Roman world was, and what civilization then implied, the wonder is that it was left to Constantine to give a name to the city. "The discoverer knows how simple and obvious his discoveries are," said the German poet, and in time all the world knows too.

Upon the promontory thus selected by genius, the beautiful city rose—so beautiful and so dominating that it came to be known, as Rome also was known, as "The City," and it is known still by that name throughout the Middle East. In spite of barbaric assaults, and the far more disastrous seizure and occupation by rival Christians under the blind Doge of Venice, it remained for eleven centuries a city of splendid and holy buildings. For nine centuries it was crowned by the noblest church in Christendom—that model of future churches and mosques designed by Anthemius, and dedicated to the Divine Wisdom by Justinian and Theodora, so peculiar a woman to be consort to an Emperor and a devotee of Divine wisdom. The Greek historian who himself saw the church transferred from the Wisdom in Christ to the Wisdom in Mahomet, described it in his lamentation as "the earthly heaven, the second firmament, the vehicle of the cherubim, the throne of the glory of God." But the description of the City itself, written by one of the citizens to an Emperor only about fifty years before the Moslem triumph, concerns us in these days more. It is quoted by Gibbon (Chapter LXVII.):—

"Constantinople," we read, "is situate on a commanding point between Europe and Asia, between the Archipelago and the Euxine. By her interposition, the two seas and the two continents are united for the common benefit of nations; and the gates of commerce may be shut or opened at her command. The harbor, encompassed on all sides by the sea and the continent, is the most secure and capacious in the world. The walls and gates of Constantinople may be compared with those of Babylon; the towers are many; each tower is a solid and lofty structure; and the second wall, the outer fortification, would be sufficient for the defence and dignity of an ordinary capital."

The writer of the letter attributes the City's splendor to the free idea formed and executed by a single mind, and improved by the obedient zeal of subjects and successors. The adjacent isles, he says, were stored with an inexhaustible supply of marble; but the various materials were transported from the most remote shores of Europe and Asia; and the public and private buildings, the palaces, churches, aqueducts, cisterns, porticoes, columns, baths, and hippodromes, were adapted to the greatness of the capital of the East. The superfluity of wealth was spread along the shores of Europe and Asia; and the Byzantine territory, as far as the Euxine, the Hellespont, and the long wall, might be considered as a populous suburb and a perpetual garden. Anyone who has visited the City, even in recent times, will recognize the general truth of that description, five hundred years after it was written. One has but to add the exquisite spires of the minarets; to convert most of the ancient churches, including St. Sophia, into mosques; to wipe out the hippodrome and some other ancient buildings; to leave parts of old Stamboul bare of houses lately consumed by fire; to increase the streets and solid buildings on the Galata and Pera side; and to line the edges of the harbor with solid quays. Then the picture of the City and the shores will be much the same as of old, from the Dardanelles up to the Euxine, except only where the flowering banks and gardens of Cape Helles and Morte Bay still show traces of our heroic and ill-fated warfare.

The strategic and commercial value of the City has been somewhat reduced since it halved the Empire and stood as the bulwark to civilization. For four and a half centuries it has been occupied by a race alien to Europe. The passage round the Cape, the Suez Canal, the Panama Canal, and the Siberian Railway have diverted the world's traffic from the ancient route. But, none the less, the City remains a vital point upon the world's surface, and the next few years will see its importance rise to the former level. The Channel

Tunnel and a bridge over the Bosphorus will take passengers without leaving the carriage direct from London to Bagdad, and round the head of the Persian Gulf to Bombay. It will not be a pleasanter route than the present, but it will be quicker, and, in some respects, easier. There will be branch lines to Baku, Teheran, and Samarcand; and aerodromes will be laid out at frequent intervals. It is a safe prophecy that within the next ten years Constantinople will again become one of the central cities of this hemisphere, rivalling London, Paris, and Berlin in importance. Napoleon's saying that the possession of the City is the ultimate question of diplomacy, for whoever possesses her possesses the Empire of the world, may then be fulfilled. And this very week that ultimate question lies before the diplomatists in Paris.

When the problem of St. Sophia's fate was raised some months ago and the curious were wondering whether the great church should return to Orthodox keeping, or to Catholic, or to what other phase of Christian faith, we suggested that the edifice might perhaps be left in the hands of Moslems until they could no longer say: "See how you Christians hate each other! See with what fury you exact vengeance upon your enemies whom your Master commanded you to love! See how you persecute, imprison, and torture those who attempt to follow your Master's words! Would it not be as well to leave the recovery of your church until you have recovered your God?" We are inclined now to make a similar suggestion on the political side. The present writer knew the City in the worst days of Abdul Hamid. He knew those whispering courts, those bloodthirsty intrigues, that filthy passage of money from silent hand to hand. It is not from ignorance of the atrocious Turkish rule that we suggest the continuance of the Sultan in some old palace there until we can rest quite assured that European rule would not be more atrocious still. We want no more of that hushed propaganda—Russian against British, British against German, German against French, French against Italian, Greek against Turk, and all against all. Let us wait till we see whether Christians can refrain from massacring each other for two years in succession. That would prove an immense advance upon our present state. Two whole years without war in Europe! And after such Peace Treaties, too! It is a wealth of happiness beyond the dreams of optimism. Until that Utopian dream is realized, and life rather than slaughter becomes the attribute of Christendom, might we not just as well leave a Sultan—even a "Red Sultan," if needs be—where he is? No Sultan has ever made a bloodier hash of his Empire than our Christian governors have made of Europe.

True, there is an alternative, or at least a modification, if only we dared hope for it. In last Tuesday's "Times" one read a long letter, signed by many well-known names, suggesting that Constantinople should be selected as the seat of the League of Nations. It is long since we first made that suggestion ourselves. It was during those happy days when the very idea of the League was young and hopeful. Now the League itself has come to birth. If it can survive the perils of babyhood; if some honest nurse can be found to fondle and rear it, without keeping half an eye all the time on the national pocket, then, indeed, as it grows to a thriving maturity among the applause of nations at last delivered from the plague of plagues, we might acclaim its removal to Constantinople with joy. For the City has the chance to become its rightful home because, as the medieval writer said, "Constantinople is situate on a commanding point between Europe and Asia. By her interposition, the two seas and the two continents are united for the common benefit of nations, and the gates of commerce may be shut or opened at her command." In a few days, we suppose, the fate of the beautiful City will be decided. Indeed, it appears to have been decided already. So far as the Straits are concerned it will see the beginnings of an international Government, unfortunately of an armed Government. But that will be only a beginning

DARTMOOR.

WHEN guns may be fired at an architectural masterpiece as part of the sound logic of an argument, then obviously there is no valid answer to those who would change the Dartmoor we know so that money may be made out of it. The artist, the lover of silence, solitude and great spaces, the rarer sort of holiday-maker who can get no fun out of concerts at the end of a pier, and other curious folk whose words are of little value when company promoters are busy, are entitled to the bitter comment, if they think it worth while to make it, that there are people who would boil down the last nightingale for its fat. But that is no argument. It is more like a malediction. And we may be certain that if there were good dividends to be got out of nightingales' lard, then all the ardent protests of those who could merely quote Keats's ode would not protect the birds from the money makers, who generally know how and when to salt the most elusive tails.

And why should Dartmoor escape? We hope it does, but why should it? Why should the Okement not go the way of the Lea and the Irwell? Has a reasonable case been found for it that did not exist when Ruskin's appeals were admired and unheeded? We hope no reasonable case exists. We hope the case for it will be based on nothing logical. We should like to know the case for the preservation of Dartmoor was no more than such a strong, popular, and unreasonable prejudice in favor of the retaining of what is beautiful that there could be no arguing with it at all, and that level-headed and practical people, who can always define what they want, had to retire this time flushed and baffled. This question of turning Dartmoor into money is not to be answered, we think, by historical research, by proving immemorial public rights, or by pleading that it is so beneficial to tourists. To put upon that moor the very blight from which it had been so strangely free that it had become unique, in southern England, as a great sanctuary from all that is hurried, mean, and mechanic, is a test for us. What is the good of arguing with people who see means of making money out of a sanctuary? That such a thought should occur to them in such a place means that we have nothing to say in any language they would understand.

Yet we understand them quite well, for we also want money. We have wanted it for a long time. Yet, at the progressive stages in a man's culture, more and more methods of making money have to be ruled out as impossible, till at last the earlier and more uncritical methods are not considered as means at all, being not much above selling wooden nutmegs or keeping food from the necessitous in the hope of a rise. So far as the desire for profit is concerned we have a fellow feeling; but do we not know, from hard experience, that the objections many vehemently express for not harnessing the Dart, the Tavy, the Teign, the Taw, and Okement, and forcing those rivers to earn dividends instead of running to "waste," are not likely to be so generally understood as the usefulness of cheap electric power? Their protectors are thinking of the beauty of those waters; their exploiters are thinking of their utility—two incompatible views, which have never agreed with each other and never will. That is why Dartmoor is a test for us, and will now prove the understanding and the sincerity of those who lately appeared dismayed by the fate of Louvain and Rheims.

Not many years ago Dartmoor would have been lost. Once the foresters had got an eye upon it, that would have meant its doom, as Hainault Forest was doomed, and the forest of Epping very nearly was. Few would have cared. But in spite of the destruction in Europe of so much that was fair, or perhaps because of that destruction (for now we know what it was that was ours, but is now lost) there really seems an excellent chance that this time the civilizers of the wild are going to be shown the door with the firmness of an illogical conviction that is new in our hard-headed community. Somewhere Thomas Hardy tells us that he thinks a time will come when men will turn from prospects that are lovely and benign, old landscapes that are as domestic as villa

gardens, to the wilderness—that makes no compromise with culture—and there find a kindness that gardens cannot offer. Has that time come? It is true it can be argued that if the high plateau of Dartmoor becomes merely a scientifically arranged catchment basin, and the rainfall is disposed, not by the way it has always gone, but by the way the makers of electric power desire, then the balance of Nature, as the saying goes, may be upset, and the farmers in the valleys may regret it. That is not only probable, but inevitable. But the strength of the opposition to the people who want to make cheap power comes from those who merely desire Dartmoor to remain just as it is, and who do not care much what the farmers think in the valleys. Part of their opposition arises from sentiment—they remember Widecombe, Chagford, Lydford, Ivybridge, or some name that is beautiful because of memory and youth; but chiefly what moves them to vehement dismay is the thought of losing Dartmoor, and not a sentiment in the least. They have a fear that Antæus must have known. They dread losing touch with earth. They want to keep near them the astringent and tonic proof of original vitality. They feel that if there the heath, the torrents, the bogs, the rocks, and the granite battlements in the sky, are surrendered to commerce, then, so to speak, they will lose touch.

For somehow The Moor, as Devon calls it, suggests that it is everlasting because it is built of more primitive stuff than the soft and fertile land around it where the communities are. A solitary traveller in that upland can persuade himself that the appearance of antiquity of his surroundings, the hoary and quivering cotton-grass, the outcrops of plutonic rock like the masonry in ruin of a giant and forgotten race, the vast but simple forms of the distant Tors under a heaven more light and spacious than elsewhere, is but the youth of what is timeless, and that here, and not among the urgent and grave affairs he has left, is an unexpected assurance of good. Perversely, among the cromlechs and monoliths left by his unknown ancestors he feels immortal, that time is but clocks, and that the important affairs of his fellows, whichever way they go, can make no more vital difference—a startling thought—than the grasshoppers can make on the substance of the hills. Should we not cherish such an assurance?

The Drama.

MR. PIM PASSES BY.

AMONG the troubles of those who marry a second time must be reckoned the thought (if they live in fiction or drama) that however dead their first partners may seem to be they are always liable to come alive again at inconvenient moments. Mr. A. A. Milne, who has already derived a good deal of fun from the familiar imperfections of sensational fiction, has had the notion of ridiculing this natural dread. His heroine, happily re-married, suddenly hears that a man answering—in name and character—to the description of her first husband has crossed from Australia on the same boat as a casual visitor to her house. Mr. Milne, surveying the situation, has asked himself mischievously what would happen supposing that sort of thing turned up in a pleasant household, and how the people would thereupon behave if they were all normally nice and kind and well-mannered English men and women of the middle-class. "Mr. Pim Passes By" is his answer to the question. But it is not a serious answer, even in a comic sense, because the husband has not really come to life again at all, and the whole thing has arisen from the mistake of foolish old Mr. Pim, to whom one name is very much like another. The comedy is thus the lightest of experiments in make-believe, and make-believe is both Mr. Milne's quite special talent and, at the moment, his temperamental failing as a dramatist.

The power to pretend the most nonsensical things, when one is grown up, is among the most precious sources

of fun that a human being can have. Mr. Milne has it in full measure. He can make his characters talk insubstantial nonsense with a better grace than any other living writer. They revel in it; and so does Mr. Milne; and so do we. This play is full of the most delightful nonsense, whether it is spoken by two happy young creatures whose lives are full of make-believe, or, with less enviable unconsciousness, by their elders. It is all high-spirited, infectious, and gracefully amusing. It provides for Miss Irene Vanbrugh a triumph in the radiation of love and whimsical charm; and it is probably, in a good sense, the most innocuous comedy by a man of great gifts which has ever been seen upon the contemporary stage.

The action of "Mr. Pim Passes By" develops, it is true, an ingenious comedy situation, in which celestially-ordained morals are identified by the more social among the characters with the conventional belief that nothing really matters so long as appearances are preserved. Great fun is made out of the moral bewilderments of these social characters, and the supposedly bigamous wife ultimately scores neatly over her magnanimous husband through the teasing ingenuities of her own temperament as well as through the tongues of babes and sucklings. But Mr. Milne is naturally so humane a man that he does not emphasize his satire or allow any of his characters to be truly vehement, so that his third act does not tell in the theatre as an author of coarser fibre would have made it do. Mrs. Marden has her triumph, but it is a triumph holding no least unpleasantness for her principal victim, for whom she retains an inexplicable affection. There is no human weakness in the triumph, or in the satire upon conventional morality, because there is no malice in Mr. Milne. He makes fun, charming fun, of everything; and his play is full of little flicks and tremors of laughter that reveal each instant the smiling mind of its creator, and his almost unique gift of inconsequence. He rides away from the comic situation—as well as from its serious possibilities—with the shyness of one who laughs in order to hide deeper feelings. It would never do for him to be serious. It might introduce a note of disconcerting reality into the realm of make-believe. The nonsense is pretty nonsense, and wholly refreshing; but in retrospect we see that Mr. Milne, so to speak, is still contentedly sailing marvellous toy balloons across an untroubled sky. They are lovely iridescent things, and the wind blows them hither and thither, and the sunlight creates startling variegations of tint upon their radiant surfaces. All the same, however, Mr. Milne is only playing, in a spirit of pleasant mischief, with these balloons of make-believe; and one knows that a stiff breeze from life would make all his balloons extremely uncomfortable and impossible to manage. It is that sense of possibly deliberate self-limitation which makes one look beyond "Mr. Pim" and into the future of its author for some true standard of judgment.

I think I can guess what will happen. One day a tremendous event will occur in Mr. Milne's life. It will come upon him like a hurricane, and he will experience the authentic agonies of creative travail. He will receive from the curves of space the idea for a new and original three act play. It will be a magnificent idea, a miracle, with a framework of steel and a foundation as firm as concrete. Mr. Milne will give to this idea all the adornment of his fancy, and his wit, and he will inform it irresistibly with the delicacy of his understanding of the things that matter. And the result will be a beautiful English comedy, brimming with grace and humor and incomparable nonsense. That is the play I see. "Mr. Pim" exemplifies most of Mr. Milne's rare and delightful qualities, but the balloons of make-believe are no material for a play in three acts. With a dominating central idea, the effect of Mr. Milne's wit and comprehension would be enhanced. If the fabric of his comedy were stronger he would carry the art of comedy to a very high pitch of refinement indeed, a pitch at which one would no longer be conscious of its refinement, but only aware of its mastery and its triumph over the temptations of the balloon world.

FRANK SWINNERTON.

Short Studies.

THE FLATS.

THE north and north-east coast of Norfolk is like a padded shoulder thrust out into the sea to beguile many a wind-worn, feathered navigator, blown out of its course, to strike sail and rest upon it. Norfolk, glory of gunners, is my native place, but to pay a filial visit was not the reason which took me to the mud-flats and saltings of the coast between Cromer and Hunstanton in the autumn of last year. For the dwellers therein are a rude people and inhospitable alike to bird and traveller. The flats themselves cover an immense district and though partly marsh and partly mud and varied with broad sandy expanses, low turf walls running seawards, sandhills tufted with coarse marram-grass, rushy pools and narrow streams, present a uniform stretch indescribable both in feature and beauty. On the plain, there is nothing between you and the horizon; earth and sky seem interchangeable and, so boundless is the adventure of the mind, that you might as well be walking upon the one as the other. The business of the land is other than to rear a multifariousness of shapes and colors for eyes to climb and wind among. It becomes what the white sheet is to the film camera, a surface for colors to come tumbling out of the paint-box and run and play and wheel upon like schoolboys out of class. "Come unto these yellow sands, and there take hands."

I remember one evening on the flats washed in a clear, mirage-like transparency—nothing was thick or muddy—so that the effect was that of a wide-awake dream, an other-worldliness without a hint of vagueness, strange yet real. Algae were pinkish-red and grass lit by golden brown; the pools were a deep cobalt and in the distance were strips of pale purple, blue and softest roseate, while over all the sky was streaked, ravelled and combed with white on a blue ground. When the sun set, the seaweed on the slime glittered a metallic emerald, the pools glowed an intense violet and the sun itself a molten gold. Chromatic dramas of this kind were always performing—there were several houses a day—but one in particular was impressed upon me. Just beyond the sandhills, a few miles from where I was staying, there was a long and thin crescentic line of firs in front of which "the lone and level sands stretch far away." If the traveller stands in the middle of this smooth floor on a fine day, he will seem to be surveying the landscape of a different planet, so singular is the effect of the great semi-circular disc of buff and yellow sand, brodered on the one side by the ultramarine of the sea, intense as the blue on the Virgin's robe in an old Italian picture, and on the other, by the darkest green of the pines. The effect was not only singular but estranging, shrinking the human personality beneath even the sandhoppers, an alien in an unpeopled and inhospitable wilderness.

The population of these flats is chiefly gulls and waders. On first acquaintance with the latter, one feels no more desire to discriminate between them than to count the separate leaves of a tree. It is by no means easy, for they are greatly persecuted, most of them of an exceeding shyness and of a strong family likeness, nor is there any cover by which to approach them. In color, too, they are much alike, especially after the moult, and to identify, to particularize these grey, fawn and silvery forms, drifting, gliding and whirling over the waste in the pearly light bathing all the land, like shadows in a dream, seems somewhat to sacrifice the general harmonious impression, to drag them out of an environment into which they so perfectly melt. Indeed the wide desolation of the flats seems to endow these waders with a new power of living among them, as other birds live in the air, so that they belong to another dimension, which is aerial and yet of the earth. They seem not so much to run over the ground as to fly with closed wings, as if struck and propelled by wandering breezes. Thus, concrete objects become shifting and liquid and inseparable and to their wavering the wonderfully subtle and evanescent coloring of the flats contributes—appearing

as they do on a fine day opalescent, from which one might pick out pinkish greys running into blues, making rosy mauves, again running into browns and again into emerald and turquoise. This soft interblending matches the flights of the birds crossing and circling one another's tracks, while through all are heard their plaintive, wild and musical cries, so fine and remote as themselves to seem part of color and light.

The most abundant of the smaller birds, next to the ringed plover, the charming little brown bird with a black gorget upon a white breast, were sanderling, "easily recognizable," say the books, "easily recognizable" by the absence of the hind-toe. If the professional ornithologist can mark the absence of a pedal appendage an inch long from the foot of a bird smaller than a song-thrush a long way off on a mud-flat, I cannot, and preferred to distinguish my sanderling by the blackish mottlings of the back, the light stippled reddish-brown (lost in winter) of the upper breast and the immaculate white of the underparts. Small bands of knots, Cnut's table bird, according to Drayton, and distinguishable by a strong rufous blush over the throat and breast, and a rather stockish build, roamed the flats and turnstones in their tortoiseshell livery (Norvice's "tangle-picker") were in more or less the same numbers. They are mining specialists in the small crustaceans lying under stones, and they will often co-operate to heave them over with their bills. Then comes the little stint, a demure elf of a bird, no bigger than a chaffinch and very self-possessed among his monstrous relations, curlew and whimbrel, in his six-inch body, cloaked in ashy-brown, with the miles of lone, level, immemorial wastes around him. Other species I will not specify here.

The appearance of these waders out upon the inscrutable marshes is so vanishing and their wild bubbling, seemingly bodiless cries, often beautifully inflected, are so rhythmical, that it is natural to think of them as always in motion, and their motions themselves as figures in a dance. Even their bathing has a ceremonious grace, and, being nymphs as much of the water as of the land, they flirt little showers over their backs and curtsy their breasts into the water, as though they glided from one device in the formal round to another. Once I watched a party of redshank (a bird three inches smaller than the shapely greenshank and of darker coloring) bathing in a strip of pool and one of them was suddenly taken with a frenzy of high spirits. Trailing feet, he hurled himself from one end to the other and back again, clapping his beautiful curved wings over his back and upon the water. Flight therefore is the supreme expression of the waders, the gathered up form of their restless movements on land, as a collocation of phrases, seeking a true outlet for the increasing emotion that urges them, finally runs into a metrical design. Dunlin (soon identified by the broad splash of black over the lower breast) are the most striking of all the waders to watch in the air, for they move with that single and unanimous consciousness which, though it is confined to a few species—starlings, wood-pigeons (rarely) and skylarks (occasionally in the winter)—seems to endow them and perhaps does with an extra sense or faculty unknown to us.

But the flight of a cloud of dunlin is more rapid than that of starlings, and they appear to confine themselves more strictly to a limited area. When they fly thus, as though a definite space for manoeuvres were pegged out for them, their brilliant turns and dashes and the streaks of silver appearing simultaneously when they expose their white underparts make the spectacle more beautiful than anything that starlings can give us. Finally, they will ravel out into a single line and, with a lovely crescentic sweep, come to rest. But all the waders fly more or less in a band and make a unified, perfect lyric of it. Many of them keep only a few inches from the ground, and their numerous curves and oscillations are performed with extraordinary dexterity on their curved and pointed wings. The redshank, too, has an individual action of the utmost beauty, throwing up the wings into an arch and displaying the white undersides, just before alighting. But the ringed plover, going just one better, repeats this

action before taking flight as well as before settling. It is curious to watch them thus arching their wings as a prelude to flight, in the same way as a diver raises his arms before the plunge. There is something deliberate and formal in it—like taking off one's hat before entering a church. It is a kind of propitiatory gesture, as if the bird invoked the ether to bear him lightly in its bosom. Now and then, one would catch one of the waders flying by itself, quartering the ground, and in its irregular twists and doublings reminding me of the method of the short-eared owl, hunting its quarry. There is yet another glory in the sanderlings' flight, for as they pass through the air, they swing their bodies from side to side, now displaying the greyish umber of the back and wing coverts, now the pure silver of the underparts. Thus, there is a double harmony in the process of flight, the rhythm of the wing-beats being varied and interwoven with the side-to-side motion of the body like a repeated refrain in a poem of a different metre from it, except that the variations are telescoped as they cannot be by the most skilful metrical technique. This see-saw action is peculiar to all the small waders, though sanderling are more highly specialized in it. They harmonize, too, so wonderfully with their surroundings that a flock will suddenly be completely blotted out, as their backs turn towards you, reappearing again in a gleam of silver and once more becoming invisible. The elusiveness of all these small sandpipers, the rapidity of their flight and the discipline of their manoeuvres over the desolate and melancholy plain create the impression that they are not birds at all, but aerial spirits visible in a silver radiance but at moments to mortal sight.

At first it seemed to me that these different species of shore-bird, though on the best of terms, did not mix to any great extent. But I found later that the marked characteristic of the waders was their gentle sociability. Nor was it altogether foolish to feel pleasure at my correction, for the uniformity of habit, residence, shape, color, language and character makes the birds a single community. But this by no means implies the capitalists' nightmare of Socialism, and I came to see that differences in character were none the less present for being subtle and hard to unravel. Apart from the marked personalities of curlew, dunlin, and turnstone, for instance, the ringed plover draw quite definitely, if not too far from the other members of the family to introduce an alien presence. The difference of physical type (shorter bill and dumper body) are but the externals. Not only is he the least shy of the group and his wistful "toolee, toolee," one of the most expressive and frequent cries, but his actions on the ground deviate from those of the others. He has a way of making a swift dash along the flat and then standing stock still, with head and neck hunched in on his shoulders. Then he will begin to peck away at the sandhoppers, making another little run and stop again to reflect. Meanwhile, the sanderling moving on an even and less thoughtful disposition, is dibbling away here and there and everywhere, stopping not for spiritual food, but some choicer morsel which has caught his roving eye. Even from these trivial indications, we can guess that the little plover is a shade more independent and original in temper, a shade more likely to contain within his loins the destinies of a mightier race in the future.

But I saw something much more interesting than this charming habit of a species—namely, a highly developed variation of a single individual of it. On the further side from me of the creek dividing the mud-flats at Blakeney was a party of twenty-three of the little plovers; on the hither, two birds alone, one a ringed plover, the other (a young bird) showing the white and warm buff and slightly decurved bill of the pigmy curlew or curlew-sandpiper as is his ungainly name. The pair moved about the mud feeding and when they got at all separated, one of them would run up to the other and they would stand for a time motionless and close together before resuming feeding. Then the plover ceased feeding and stood meditating, while the little curlew went on with his meal. When the latter had moved some

distance, the plover took his elegant little run and resumed his cogitations, close to—as my thick wits at last discovered—his comrade. All of a sudden, the plover on the other side of the creek took flight, but little curlew and little plover remained behind, quite unconcerned and happy in one another's company. It was a rare experience to be admitted into the secret of this intimacy, as it was disquieting to reflect that any day it might be ruptured and one or both of these avian friends disappear into the bag of the gunner. These comradeships are no doubt common in bird-life and would be more frequently noted, were not the art or science of sympathetic observation in its infancy. Its day will come, but will it come too late? Such friendships are obviously more interesting than the commensalism that exists between the crocodile and the spur-winged plover, which is based on a mutual self-interest, though a kindly supererogatory sentiment may develop from it.

I doubt whether I have anything like compassed the charm of these waders—so shy, so volatile, and yet so appealing that to slaughter them as they are slaughtered all day long seems as abominable as shooting fairies. For there remains their shape, their poise on their slender stilts, balanced by the length of the bill and forming a singularly accomplished artistic design. They are like a lily or a daffodil gathered with its whole long stem. A violet is lovely of itself, but it does not possess the satisfying element of long line. In the heron and stork this line is too long, but the shore birds from curlew to little stint strike the exact mean and are so decorative with it, that one realizes more fully how very well the great craftsmen of the East knew what they were about. Then there is the romance of their inaccessibility. We can climb trees, but we cannot walk on mud-flats. Thirdly, there is the exquisite pencilling of the plumage. In the plane of form, the legs are of the frailest compatible with use, and body, bill, throat, and general contour follow slender lines in musical conformity with them; in the plane of color, the delicate centres and margins of each feather merge into the pale subdued brown or grey tones, themselves relieved by vivid smears of black, white, rufous and chestnut. Without disparaging other birds, these waders did seem to me the most essentially perfect bird-form I have seen, perhaps the only bird-form that would look well out of its natural surroundings. That is saying a good deal, for birds approach our highest concepts of ideal beauty, and the loveliest flower is a poor thing to them. Would that I might have been a disembodied spirit for a space, to fly invisible among them and witness every little thing they did, even the flowering of every little wayward thought and caprice in the great sum of them that has mounted with every falling sun!

H. J. M.

Letters from Abroad

THE NEW GERMANY.

MY DEAR —,—Immediately after the Revolution of November 9th, 1918, the German people was completely prepared for demilitarization and for an absolute Peace policy. But the Spartacists on the one hand, and the Armistice on the other, gradually brought the people back to the necessity of arming. However, had the Independent Socialist Party (Minority) been determined to work hand in hand with the Majority Socialists, there would have been at the General Elections a Socialist majority in the Reichstag, and socialization would have been proceeded with as a matter of course. But the Independents, ballasted by the Communists (Spartacists), could not work with the Majority members and broke away, taking up the old negative position, shouting class war and the World Revolution. The War, the Armistice, and the Versailles Peace have left no classes in Germany. The whole property and capital of the country are mortgaged, and through the occupied territory in the Rhineland the last drops of the economic blood of the

nation are being drained away. Germany is a nation of proletarians, possessing nothing but the capacity for work and the ability of execution. The class war formula can no more be applied to the German nation. The poverty of the nation is mirrored in the depreciation of the German currency—one mark (in pre-war days equal to one shilling) has sunk to 1½d.!

It is, however, very hard to make the working class understand the condition of their country.

The Majority Socialists, in consequence of the defection of the Independents, had the alternative of retiring from office and leaving the State to the non-Socialist parties, or to get a coalition with those parties who were prepared to defend the Republic (against the Monarchists) and to pursue a policy of social reform. On these conditions the Majority Socialists combined with the Democrats and the Catholic Centre, and formed a Government. This Government carried the new Constitution—a most democratic piece of work, embodying also a good deal of control of industry by the working classes through Works Committees and Industrial Councils. Meanwhile the democratization of the administration and education is going on apace, but there is a lack of capable men and women among the Socialists to take over these offices, for the Social Democratic Party being split up, there is a good deal of waste of energy. As far as I understand it, the leading idea of the Government is as follows. They argue: Germany has lost all its property; it must start anew. There are men who can work with their hands, and there are men who can direct that work. There are no capitalist employers nor proletarian employees. They are all proletarians. Why not combine and work together, without strikes, without class war but on conditions and by virtue of arrangements established by the Constitution? A Constitution carried by an Assembly elected by universal suffrage of all men and women at the age of 21 years and above. There is complete democracy and self-government of equal citizens, since they are all poor and possess nothing but their hands and brains.

The Independents, distracted and torn by profound differences of opinion, are either cavilling or demanding the dictatorship of the class war proletariat. But Germany refuses to be governed by a minority—by any minority, be it Royalist or Communist.

There is of course a strong Royalist minority in the country, owing partly to the awful burdens imposed upon the defeated nation by the Entente, partly to the terrible economic condition of the country, partly to the internecine war among the Socialists. This Royalist minority is not necessarily so on principle, it is rather the expression of the general dissatisfaction with the conditions that are prevailing now in consequence of the circumstances mentioned before. A great part of the nation feels that it has been betrayed by the leading men of the Entente. But there is no hatred against any nation as a whole. There is much disgust with Wilsonian phraseology, Clemenceau's hardness of heart and revengefulness, Lloyd George's demagoguery, but there is no hatred against America, France, or Great Britain.

In the face of such conditions and currents it is very risky to forecast the future. I may say, however, that the present Government, in one form or another, will continue and will stand between royalism and social chaos, fighting both extremes, unless the Entente continues to humiliate and overburden the nation and render its life utterly unbearable. In this case no party will agree to assume the responsibility. The nation will then invite the Entente to govern Germany.

Germany has no classes now. It is bleeding to death; 20 per cent. will have either to perish or to emigrate, and yet emigration is impossible, since none of the immigration countries is willing to allow Germans to settle there, at least not within the next years. Believe me, whenever I travel to town and see Germans chatting and laughing or looking stolidly at one another, I am amazed at the inner strength of the race. They are studying hard, reading and thinking, but they have not grasped yet how terrible their downfall was. And perhaps so it is good. People tell me that work in the factories and mines and fields is more regular now; the

nation would assuredly recover if it had only the will and the determination. But if the world does not turn Socialist and peaceful, Germany will in 50, 100 or 150 years repay to the full what the Versailles Peace has done to her.

I have mentioned before that I travel very often to town. It is, normally, only a journey of a half-hour. Yet it happens often that the engine gets out of breath and refuses to budge. The rolling stock is defective, mostly through the war, partly through having had to hand over to the Entente the best engines and carriages, and in such enormous numbers. Transport being defective, there is often no coal, and the winter has set in with great vigor. A pair of boots for a boy cost 60 marks. I had to buy for myself a suit of clothes and I paid 550 marks! I have not eaten meat for two months. I have five children between the ages of 13 and 6 years; only the two youngest get milk at school. The Socialists in the municipalities are doing excellent work for the school children. To show you what the Revolution has meant: My second boy attends a public school. Prior to the War and the Revolution those schools were really nationalist training colleges. To-day three of my boy's masters are members of the Socialist Party! A free spirit is gradually pervading those schools. And yet, talk to the Independents or Communists, and they will tell you there was no Revolution at all. A German high school master—a Socialist! Nobody would have believed it a few years ago. The Government will gradually publish new school books, all the monarchist and warlike chapters being eliminated, while pacifist and democratic chapters will be inserted. The new Act on Works Committees and Councils will soon take effect. Much reform work is being done, despite all difficulties and hardships. And before all, the nation is being trained to self-government.—Yours, &c.,

M.B.

Letters to the Editor.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT IN EGYPT.

SIR,—One of the arguments advanced by certain English journals in order to justify the presence of England in Egypt—an argument of which traces are even to be found in the speech of Lord Curzon and the articles of Sir Valentine Chirol—is that fanaticism is not unconnected with the movement which impels the Egyptian people to revolt against British domination. One could not protest with too much indignation against such an accusation. The grave events of which the Nile Valley has been, for a year, the theatre, prove, indeed, that no other people in the world, at the most decisive moments of their history, have shown a more completely liberal spirit than the Egyptians have manifested. Standing shoulder to shoulder on the common ground of national interests and rights, and excluding all other considerations of class and creed, the two fractions of the population (Christians and Moslems) united in the purest love of country have, without any effort whatsoever on their part, achieved unanimity of policy and action in the struggle for independence. Christians and Mahomedans—Mahomedans as well as Christians—have but a single thought, namely, to demand and to obtain the freedom of their native land. Sons of Egypt, grouped in a common family and ignoring, as such, all inequality or favoritism, they are the first to be astonished when their opponents invoke religious objections which have no sense in their eyes.

Recently thousands of the leading Copts assembled at the Patriarchal See, under the Presidency of the Head of the Community, and there proclaimed once more their resolve to win complete independence. The Mahomedans similarly, by the voice of the Ulemas of the El Azhar Mosque, and through the Members of the Higher Council of its University, addressed to the Sultan, the Prime Minister, and the British High Commissioner a petition in which, with a high political instinct, and an impressive moderation, they asked "as a unique means of solidly establishing peace in the country, reconciling the two parties, and safeguarding reciprocal interests," that Great Britain should honorably fulfil its

promises and recognize the complete independence of Egypt, the population being determined, in case their rights were acknowledged, "to watch over, and safeguard, the interests of the English Government with the same care as would be bestowed on the interests of the other Powers.

Thus, the heads of the greatest Islamic University in the world, whose authority extends over the whole of Islam, have turned their thoughts exclusively to the destinies of their country. Taking their inspiration from the very doctrine of which they are the depositaries, they speak the language of a patriotism which is simultaneously the highest and the most tolerant. What a lesson in Liberalism is thus given by these religious Heads!

Hence—when on December 11th last, a troop of English soldiers, pursuing a group of the population, broke into the enclosure of the Mosque of El Azhar and assaulted those who had taken refuge there, thus violating a sanctuary to which the eyes of Mussulmans throughout the world are piously turned—this act of violence gave rise in the country to a painful feeling of sadness.

The Mussulmans of Egypt—as their history proves—have always had the greatest respect for the religious sentiments of those who do not share their beliefs, and in their capacity as Egyptians, they would not have felt less hurt by an act of violence committed against a Copt Sanctuary, and less indignant over such an outrage, than were the Copts.

The protest against this outrage addressed by the Ulemas and the Members of the Higher Council of El Azhar, to the Sultan, the President of the Council, and Lord Allenby, is couched in the most moderate terms. It expresses the feeling of sadness awakened in all hearts by this unpardonable incident. It is a worthy and necessary protest, uninspired either by political prejudice or mere sectarian sentiment. If human respect is due to all religious edifices without distinction, the time-honored Mosque of El Azhar deserves it—if possible—in a higher degree, for throughout the centuries it has been held in the highest esteem, not only amongst the Mussulmans of the universe, but amongst all those who take an interest in the history of Islam.

The Egyptian Delegation can only add its protest to that of the masters of the great University. This most unfortunate of incidents has only been followed—as we have seen—by calm and sorrowful declarations. No act or incident on the part of the population has, or could have, been chronicled. This time again it is impossible to make a charge of fanaticism against the popular sentiment which is so profoundly patriotic and so clearly traditional. If certain organs of the London Press tried to see in the protest of the Ulemas of El Azhar a gesture of provocation, in order to use it as a political weapon in an imperialistic campaign, they would be preparing for themselves a rapid deception. Religious sentiment in Egypt does not and will not ever encroach upon patriotic sentiment. It is necessary that this should be known everywhere and that contrary assertions or insinuations should be exposed and refuted. It is our duty to raise our voices in vigorous denunciation of charges by means of which an attempt is made to cast discredit on the sincerity of our Liberalism and the purity of our national patriotism. —Yours, &c.,

SAAD ZAGLOUL,

President of the Egyptian Delegation.

A PROGRAMME OF GERMAN MILITARISM.

SIR,—I read with sympathy your remarks on Mr. Churchill's plan of using Germany against Russia.

As early as December, 1918, the German militarist party saw that its chance lay in persuading England to utilize the German Army against Russia. I give an abbreviated account of a scheme for such concerted action which was given to me by a well-known member of the German Nationalist Party on December 15th, 1918 (I was at that time visiting Berlin for journalistic purposes).

A statement of an almost identical programme was given to other English journalists in Germany about the same time by Herr Arnold Rechberg, who has up to date never wearied of commending variations of the same scheme to English pressmen. Here is a summary of the plan in which a year

ago a number of German militarists placed their hopes for the reconstruction of the German Army:—

"Russia is politically disorganized and financially ruined and therefore incapable of exploiting her natural resources. It is therefore in Russian interest that England should develop these resources. (France is too much of an agricultural nation to do so, and America has sufficient opportunities for the investment of capital in her own country.)

"But if England wishes to invest capital in Russia she must guarantee this capital politically.

"The English Fleet cannot protect investments in the interior of Russia. This protection can only be given by a strong land army. The French Army is geographically disqualified for this task. The German Army alone could fully guarantee English investments in Russia. But in order to do this successfully the integrity of the German Empire must be preserved and the German Army must be restored to its former strength.

"A guarantee that this army would act in the interests of England would be found in the fact that a Germany restored to industrial prosperity by England's protection would be dependent on England for raw materials. England would also provide Germany with a market for her manufactured goods.

"Thus the British Empire would have a direct interest in German industrial prosperity.

"As a war indemnity England could take over a third of the most conspicuous German industrial undertakings.

"England could never depend on the support of the French Army as she could on that of the German if England went hand in hand industrially. The French Army is less qualified geographically to protect British interests on the Continent. The German Army would protect the British Empire continentally and the English Fleet would guarantee the freedom of the seas to the German Empire."

And so on.

At the time this amazing programme was formulated the German Army was, of course, practically non-existent. The disruption of the Empire was threatened. German militarism, which has since made such a wonderful recovery, was then utterly discredited. At that time public speakers in Germany did not call a soldier a soldier, but spoke euphemistically of a "proletarian still in uniform." And German industrialists lived in constant fear of a nationalization of their respective industries.

To the irremediably crude diplomacy of a number of German militarists and monarchists and unpolitical industrialists it seemed possible to dissociate us from our Russian allies five weeks after the Armistice by the bribe of Russian spoil guaranteed to us by the German Army! Napoleon would not have dared to make such a cynical appeal to the greed of his "nation of shopkeepers." Let us hope that Mr. Churchill will give no further color to the hopes of schemers like Herr Arnold Rechberg, and that the British nation will always refuse to accept the service of the German sword.—Yours, &c.,

SOUVENEZ-VOUS.

THE STATE OF SYRIA.

SIR,—The state of Syria becomes daily more unhappy. Little news filters through to the outside world of the events which are now taking place in that "liberated" portion of the Turkish dominions. But what we do hear is fraught with danger to the peace of Asia and the world. The French have established themselves at Beyrut and in the hinterland. They occupy the whole of the littoral up to Cilicia. They hardly take the trouble to disguise their intention of overrunning the so-called Arab provinces over which rules the indigenous government of the Emir Feisul, son of King Hussein, and the accepted champion of the national aspirations of the Syrians of all creeds except the Catholics in Lebanon who number at the most a quarter of a million, though these are now ranging themselves on his side.

There has already been bloodshed. Last month French troops, after the French Government had agreed with the Emir Feisul not to occupy Baalbek, the important town which lies at the head of the rich plain of Begaa and dominates Damascus, on the allegation that a French soldier had been assaulted, sent a detachment into the place. Fighting ensued for several hours, and according to the reports that have come through from Cairo both sides suffered heavy losses.

The French Press affects to treat the incident as an outbreak of Moslem "fanaticism." But the following paragraph, which I translate from the Cairo Arabic daily "Al-Amam," of December 18th, seems to negative any supposition of that kind. "The following statement has been issued by

the National Defence Committee in the Begaa district (which includes Baalbek):—

"The French forces at Rayak have been informed on December 6th that they are immediately to retire from that post and that the Syrians are firmly decided to meet every foreign armed occupation with all the force at their disposal. The Committee wishes it to be publicly known that no distinction is observed between Moslems and Christians regarding the defence of the country, although foreign intrigues, inspired by greed, are doing their best to excite such discord. Any man who is found to be setting one religion against the other will be severely dealt with."

The spectacle is indeed a melancholy one. We promised the Arabic peoples of Asia that if they fought on our side against the Turks they would regain their freedom and be united once more with their brothers from the north, east, west, and south. (This was the very phrase employed in one of General Maude's proclamations.) What has happened? Instead of being united, they see Arabic speaking Asia divided into three or four separate provinces—Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia. While the Allies appear to have a tenderness for the Turk, who in Asia Minor is to be left independent, and may even remain at Constantinople, the Arabs, our Allies be it remembered, are to be under various "mandates" which the French appear to interpret in Syria as giving them powers such as we have of late been employing in Egypt with notorious results.

The strength of the feeling which our policy has aroused can be gauged from the resolution passed at a Congress of Syrian Associations in Cairo on December 15th last. This Congress, which was composed of representatives of all Syrian parties, including the Lebanese, who hitherto have been looked upon as devoted heart and soul to the French cause, unanimously protested against the projected partition of their country and against all treaties, secret and otherwise, having for their object the dividing up of Syria, and sent the following demands to the Peace Conference:—

(1) That Syria should be acknowledged to be one and indivisible and should embrace the frontiers on the north the Taurus, on the south the Hedjaz, on the east Mesopotamia, and on the west the Mediterranean and the line Rata-Akaba.

(2) The Government of Syria should be constitutional, democratic, and non-religious, based on a federal system, with provincial autonomy for its various districts.

The members of the Congress expressly reserved the question of independence or a mandate. But that even the most Francophil Syrians interpret the meaning of mandate very differently from what Western Governments attribute to that blessed, if rather hypocritical, word is shown by the fact that the newly-installed French Administration in the Lebanon is already at loggerheads with the inhabitants, who as Catholics were supposed to have specially welcomed the French advent. Thus the *Megliss Idara Libnan*, the Assembly of the Lebanon which under the Turkish régime enjoyed practically the rights of a sovereign Assembly, protested recently against the interference of the French in all departments of the administration, including justice, and passed a resolution that the French High Commissioner had not the right to nominate officials. Though the French did not do anything against the Assembly, the "Barq," the semi-official Arabic paper of the Lebanon, was suspended for having printed this resolution. Thus the Allies bring freedom and liberty to the oppressed nationalities of the Middle East! It is hardly strange that many Syrians are already regretting the days of the Ottoman régime when they had a fair measure of autonomy. If we allow things to proceed on their present course unchecked we shall inevitably be faced with a *rapprochement* between the Arabs and the Turks with all its incalculable menace throughout the whole Moslem world.

The remedy is plain. We should keep our promises and insist with our Allies that the Syrians and Arabs shall achieve that national unity for which they fought. We must be prepared to set up a national Government in Mesopotamia under an Oriental prince—Abdulla, son of King Hussein of the Hedjaz, would probably be acceptable; the French should be prepared similarly to leave Syria, and again in Palestine, where the problem is enormously complicated through the Zionist aspirations, we must institute a native Government. The inhabitants of all these countries fully realize that they must obtain European or American assistance if they are

to prosper. But they are not prepared willingly to admit foreign "mandates," which are a thinly disguised form of annexation. One lesson the Liberal of to-day should have learnt is that no Government can succeed which does not command a certain minimum of assent on the part of the governed.—Yours, &c.,

MID-EAST.

London. January 7th, 1920.

MISS WILLCOCKS ON THOMAS CARLYLE.

SIR,—May a great nephew of Thomas Carlyle comment, with the brevity which the exigencies of your space require, on the exegesis of Carlyle which Miss M. P. Willcocks contributes to a recent issue of THE NATION?

"He both saw and foresaw as no other man of his age did, perhaps as no other man ever has," says Miss Willcocks. Perhaps, therefore, he both saw and foresaw more even than we see and foresee. "There seems," says Miss Willcocks, "to have been only one man in the nineteenth century who felt the change that was coming, who felt it with dread and horror. That man was Thomas Carlyle. . . . To Carlyle, the coming spirit was that of mere anarchy. . . . He heard what he would fain have avoided hearing, the rough bourdon. . . . of the change in human ideals which was going to sweep away the structure of nineteenth century life. And the more clearly he heard this menace of democracy the more fiercely did he build his breakwaters of defence." And again, "Carlyle's Kingdom of Heaven was passing, and he alone knew it, though, like a frenzied man, he tried to go on building his palace of power." One would have thought it clear to most that the England of Carlyle's time, with its Mammon-worship and "profit-and-loss philosophy," was to him a veritable kingdom of Hell. And this not so much because the desperate need of fundamental change crucified him, but because he saw with burning intensity the tragic futility of the remedial methods propounded by the "*laissez-faire* and devil-take-the-hindmost economists," and "rosewater philanthropists" (abounding in zeal for the emancipation of the chattel-slaves of other countries and the redemption of the heathen, but painfully Laodicean in altering the squalid conditions of the "wage-slaves" of their own country).

He saw that, unless the existing social system was fundamentally altered, not merely *varnished*, the society of "constituted anarchy" in which he lived would explode inevitably in an open "dance of anarchy," such as the world has witnessed during the past five years. And his every nerve shuddered at the prospect. The "Time-spirit" in his mysterious wisdom ordained that his warnings, Gargantuan though they were, should be unavailing, and the world is paying the penalty. But the world is also, despite any appearance to the contrary, learning the lesson. And one notes that, foremost, in this country at least, among those who are pressing the lesson home are *alumni* of Ruskin College, that worthy monument (how different from the "Hudson's Statues" of Carlyle's day!) of the great man who humbly called Carlyle his "Master." "If," said Carlyle of Ruskin, "he had but twenty or thirty good years before him to shoot his swift swinging arrows into the Python he'd make the monster turn up his white belly at last." Carlyle called the Python "the M'Croudy Gospel"; modern writers call it Capitalism.

Miss Willcocks would object, of course, that Carlyle had no faith in "Democracy," that he "had no eye for the strength of a Christ," that he was an authoritarian, a hero-worshipper, an Imperialist, and paid scant respect to "Freedom" and "Liberty." Well, as Carlyle pointed out long ago, Democracy, Christianity, Hero-worship, Imperialism, Freedom, and Liberty are spacious words requiring a more precise terminology than has yet been evolved. Carlyle knew well that there always had been, and always would be, Authority. God, it may be said, with sufficient certainty, is Autocrat as well as Democrat. But Carlyle saw that there was small virtue in the "democracy" of his day, and that in reality it was a "dupeocracy," guided by able editors, stump orators, and other members of the hierarchy of the "Temple of Mammon." "Democracy" of this type reached its apogee in this country not long ago, and even the most foolish are beginning to view the result with consternation.

Carlyle was a militarist in the sense in which Jehovah Mahomet, Luther, and Cromwell were militarists, but if Miss Willcocks will turn to the "Dumdrudge" passage in "Sartor" and the Chalk-farm passage in the Essay on Johnson, she will appreciate that he was far from accounting martial courage as the highest form of bravery, and that he saw there were moments in history when he would have faced death and worse rather than unsheathe the sword. "Carlyle had no eye for the strength of a Christ." Thus Miss Willcocks about a man in whose writings are to be found passages unsurpassed in secular literature for their reverent appreciation of Jesus, but who saw that Christianity, great and priceless though it was, was only a precious part of the Almighty Whole.

Carlyle may be called an Imperialist, but his imperialism was the imperialism not of McCroudy and Threadneedle Street but the sort of imperialism which one imagines the Labor Party will adopt when it assumes the government of the British Empire. To apply a topical illustration to the whole matter, one would say that Carlyle had arrived long ago at the point where now stand multitudes of citizens who are associated with the Left Wing of the Labor Party.—Yours, &c.,

J. CARLYLE HOGGAN.

THE LEAGUE AND THE TREATY.

SIR,—In your issue of January 3rd, Sir Sydney Olivier suggests that the League of Nations Union is mistaken in taking the line that "when once the League (of Nations) gets established it will act with a modifying and solvent effect on the Treaty," and that the right course for this Union to pursue would be to "face the fact that the Peace Treaty makes impossible the effectual idea of the League of Nations . . . and concentrate the efforts of their organization in the first place on educating the public to recognize the true character of the Versailles Treaty."

It is difficult to see the logic of this argument. The League of Nations provides machinery by which unsuitable Treaties can be revised—indeed, this is one of its most important functions—and without the League there is no practical way in which the Versailles Treaty can be revised at all.

Mr. Keynes's book, undoubtedly, puts the case against the Treaty with great power and deserves a very wide circulation. But Sir Sydney Olivier cannot really believe it would be right for the League of Nations Union to make itself financially responsible for its distribution.

We are glad to think that Mr. Keynes himself is not in disagreement with our policy, as he seconded the motion for the formation of a local branch of the League of Nations Union on the occasion of Lord Robert Cecil's visit to Cambridge in October.—Yours, &c.,

H. H. WADE, Lieut.-Colonel,
Editor-in-Chief.

League of Nations Union,
22, Buckingham Gate, S.W.1.

JUSTICE FOR THE ARMENIANS.

SIR,—In your current issue, under the heading "Justice for the Turks," Mr. Douglas Fox Pitt says the British "have indicted the Turks with massacring their Armenian subjects, Armenians having first massacred Muslims, and risen in rebellion against the Turkish Empire."

In this crisis of their fate, which the Peace Conference is on the point of deciding, it is a serious thing to allege against the Armenians that they brought massacre upon themselves by first massacring Muslims. I follow these things pretty closely, but I am unaware of any just ground for the charge. Neither is it true that they had "risen in rebellion": the utmost that can be said is that after generations of tyranny and massacre by the Turks a few young Turkish Armenians did join the Russian armies in 1914 or 1915. Is it suggested that that was any excuse for the Turks massacring old men, women, and children, both before and afterwards?—Yours, &c.,

ANEURIN WILLIAMS.

SIR V. CHIROL AND EGYPT.

SIR,—I owe an apology to Sir Valentine Chirol for attributing to him the expression about "niggers" which he disclaims in your last issue. He said many strong things about the mistakes and manners of our officials, but not precisely this. The expression occurred in a letter by Mr. D. A. Cameron which appeared in the same type under the second of Sir Valentine's articles (November 6th). He spoke of our officers "entirely altering the old régime of sympathy and courtesy, and bringing about a new cry of niggers and conquered country."—Yours, &c.,

THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE.

VIENNA RELIEF FUND.

The Editor acknowledges, with many thanks, receipt of the following sums:—

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Poetry.

THE NEXT TURN.

CEASE, vain body, cease complaint.
Cease to hurry, cease to faint;
Plume your wings no more for flight;
Sink, embosomed in the night.

Turn no more the moving glass
On Time's shadows as they pass;
Scatter, where Self's seed was sown,
Nowhere be, and Nothing own.

You are sped; the vanish'd Hour
That in-penned your tiny power,
Other star-dust now conceives,
Other atomies bereaves.

No more food can Mind bestow,
For the mite that death you owe—
Next man's turn for Mother's care,
Naked from the house you fare!

Little candle, quench your spark,
Myriad lanterns pierce the dark;
Sun-scorch'd flower-bell, ope your cup,
And drink the eternal sweetness up.

I.—THE BUDS AND THE LEAVES.

THE buds hang freshly in the water—
My fair-haired sons and my dark-haired daughter.
The leaves dance drily on the wind—
My father, my mother and the ghosts of my kind!

II.—THE WEB OF DREAMS.

I spun my web of dreams in the sun;
But ere the golden day was done
A left-hand wind blew over the bay,
And carried my web of dreams away.

III.—CAER.

In the cup of the speedwell
The clear dew lies;
But clearer is the dew
In Caer's eyes.

IV.—THE MOON.

The moon, like Love's bow, is bent in the sky.
In the lake it hangs heavily—
Love's bow no longer, crystal-bright,
But a sword of dark and bloody light.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL.

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THE ASSOCIATION HAS RECENTLY ISSUED A PUBLICATION:—

"Underwriting for the Investor," which is full of valuable and interesting information for Investors. It also explains generally the business of the Association, how it can help you, and how you can join if you wish to do so. A copy will be sent, free of charge, to all applicants mentioning this paper.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Mansoul, or the Riddle of the World." A Poem. By Charles M. Doughty. (Selwyn & Blount. 7s. 6d.)
 "Sir Roger de Coverley, and other Literary Pieces." By Sir James George Frazer. (Macmillan. 8s. 6d.)
 "Before the War." By Viscount Haldane. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)
 "Empire and Commerce in Africa." By Leonard Woolf. (Allen & Unwin.)

WHEN the "Vie des Martyrs" was published, its reviewer in THE NATION dwelt with care, as though it were a most significant clue, upon M. Duhamel's declaration that, "en dépit de toute protestation de sympathie, l'être dans la chair souffre toujours solitairement, et c'est ainsi pourquoi la guerre est possible." Yet I fancy that dismaying truth was surmised by every soldier who was doomed to the front line. I have heard it expressed often enough in some form or other by men whose early fervor for war had been reduced to fatalism by the double brutality of shell-fire and civilian cheerfulness. There is no doubt whatever that the war continued as long as it did because suffering is incommunicable, and because, thank God, we are plain and simple folk who take things as they are. The agony that is felt in the act of sticking a flagged pin in a war-map can be borne. M. Duhamel is right. War is possible because of that. If, every time a soldier was hit, a civilian dropped at home with a miraculously similar wound—and picture the scenes in the Strand during a great offensive—you could estimate accurately the length of any war. Or, as a soldier once put it to me in the winter of 1915: "When will there be peace again? But supposing it were possible to get all the kings, bishops, and great statesmen and diplomatists into the Ypres salient, and to keep them there till the war was over . . . how long then? Well, then we could begin ordering our spring bulbs." There is, indeed, no doubt of it; war is possible because each sufferer must endure in solitude, and no amount of sympathy can alter that fact; the heroic course of our martial logic is insulated from another's pain. Yet let us imagine that in any war every civilian concerned developed continuous neuralgia that could only vanish with the "Cease fire"! What long queues of sorrowful faces in flannel would be seen silent and dismal in Downing Street (and all down one side of Victoria Street and up the other) waiting for an urgent word with the Premier; who himself, helped by fire in his teeth, would be wondering in involuntary tears whether it were better to use common sense or a knock-out blow!

BUT the bitter mood in which we dwell upon the past, and what cannot be recalled from it, is as barren as the knowledge gained that war is possible merely because people have enough imagination to keep out of it themselves, if they can, or at the worst to find a safe job in it, but not enough to understand what it means to the men who get bits of iron in the belly. Moreover, it is not the mood of Duhamel in "Civilization" (which has been reviewed in THE NATION), now to be had in an admirable translation published by the Swarthmore Press. When you have read this book, you get the impression of what literally was the situation—a rampart of exposed and quivering flesh behind which we could debate things in safety and in no special hurry, for it was not our flesh. This French artist has given us the best stories from the purgatory that I have yet seen. If they have been written with a purpose, it shows nowhere. They have the artlessness of the inconsequential. It just happened so. It could have happened in no other way. Yet as you read these short narratives there is a slow suffusion of dawn in the mind. You are surprised that, with the light getting better, what you had accepted in the night of war for one thing turns out to be something very different. What you had thought important becomes trivial. What you did not know was there at all, for its silent and sombre mass was then part of the night, becomes dominant and awe-inspiring; yet now you know it was there all the time, and, with a surging of new and unutterable thoughts at this surprising revelation, you

realize how different life would now be to us had our minds not been dark for so long to this testimony.

"BEFORE the war I was an assistant in a commercial laboratory," says the narrator who tells us the story, "Civilization," which gives the title to the volume; "but now I swear that, if ever I have the doubtful privilege of surviving this horror, I will never take up the work again. The country—the pure, fresh country for me! Anywhere away from these filthy factories—far from the roar of your aeroplanes and all the machinery in which formerly I took an interest when I did not understand things, but which horrify me now because I see in them the very spirit of the war—the principle and cause of the war." In a very few pages, Duhamel, in this sketch which for us makes plain the surroundings of a stretcher-bearer just behind an "offensive," not only gives us what a good descriptive writer might, the appearance of the place, but a presentiment also of its meaning, which creates in a reader the abiding astonishment and revulsion that every soldier will remember—as though a man were moving, wide awake this time, through the events of a nightmare, compelled in his movements by an unseen and ruthless evil; where all is mad, yet where all is ordered by the course of a shocking but undeniable logic. Once admit the beginning—and who did not admit, in wonder and admiration, what commerce and material science were busy upon?—and here is the end of it. Industrious, unheeding, and unwarned, praising his own miraculous ingenuity, man has created powers which now he cannot control, which mutilate him and destroy the things he loves even as he realizes that the cause of his ruin is of his own making. Yet Duhamel makes no argument of it. He takes the incidents, the sounds, the sights, which were the commonplace of the front, places them in certain relations, and there it is. Well, in spite of guns and tanks, and the strange popularity of the men who destroy us, the Churchills, Clemenceaus, and Ludendorffs; and the ubiquity and spontaneity of greed, fear, and bigotry, and of armies of a million men and war-ships enough to poison every sea, I yet believe the work of men like Duhamel is more potent than all the forces of darkness, and in time will disperse them; for, it is important to remember, all simple folk, as well as the artists and thinkers, are in revolt against the evil that we have done, and would end it, if they but knew the way; and they will learn that in time, as they learned to work their machinery.

I HAVE read, I think, nearly all that has been written upon "the Somme," that most tragic region on earth, with every place-name there at once repellent and fascinating, like black magic, conjuring scenes which we do not want but must have; but Duhamel, in this book, surprises one with a new prospect of the Somme that makes one feel that, though it has been seen before, yet it has never been seen in that light—and the light, somehow, one knows to be peculiarly the light of that land of desolate memories. Or read "Revaud's Room," and know that the kind of days and nights passed in it were never once mentioned in the newspapers during the war, were never betrayed to his friends by any sufferer, were never even hinted at in any heroic speech by a great statesman, were never imagined by those women who were proud to give their men to the war, and yet such hours, the only passage of time in Revaud's room, were as inevitable as gunfire, and as usual in France as fear and pain.

THERE is Ribot, too, and the Lady in Green who visited him. There is a most destructive study called "Discipline," which one specially commends for the War Office library—but no, let it be read at schools, where there is a free and lively intelligence, and results may be fruitful. But it would be hard to say which of all these fifteen sketches and stories one most admires. It is no good solemnly arguing about war and armaments and foreign policy while the emotions of men are unprovoked. Give such books as this a wide circulation, and with the dawning of a vital comprehension of what that power is which compels such a scene as Duhamel describes in the "Horse Dealers," and the intrigues of the war-makers would vanish before a gale of indignation and laughter that would make them look just what they are.

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WORDSWORTH.

'Wordsworth: an Anthology.' Edited by T. J. COBDEN. SANDERSON. (Richard Cobden-Sanderson. 8s. 6d. net.)

"On Tuesday, April 23rd, 1850, as his favorite cuckoo-clock struck the hour of noon, his spirit passed away." So we read in F. W. H. Myers's short biography of Wordsworth. By what fatality is it that Wordsworth's most devout admirers cannot keep an element of the comic out of the picture even of his last hour? It is sometimes suggested that it is only hostile critics who see anything ridiculous in Wordsworth. Lamb, however, was no hostile critic, and he could laugh at him while he loved him. The truth is, the element of ridiculousness in Wordsworth is as impossible to deny as the element of amorosness in Burns. It is as obvious as an advertisement. Perhaps it has even been of some value as an advertisement. It has served to keep Wordsworth a subject of controversy, and this means that new readers must constantly turn to him to discover how much there really is in him of absurdity and how much of genius. They will undoubtedly find in him an absurdity without a parallel of its kind in great literature. But they will also find a gateway into a world lovelier far than Arcady and as real as one's home.

The element of ridiculousness in Wordsworth is due for the most part to his excessive solemnity; and his solemnity is due in part to timidity. He is not timid for his own sake, but for the sake of his message. He cannot trust his poetry to change men's hearts of itself: he is unhappy till he has pressed the moral home like a village schoolmaster. This is all the more curious seeing that Wordsworth has so great a faith in the power of Nature to influence us by merely penetrating our spirits. "There is a blessing in the air," he cries as he tastes the spring:—

"Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth;
It is the hour of feeling.

"One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason:
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

"Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey:
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day."

Wordsworth, it will be seen, trusted the penetrating power of nature. He did not equally trust the penetrating power of poetry. There was something of Mr. Fairchild in him that usually wished to improve the occasion. He seems positively to squeeze the old "leech-gatherer," for instance, in order to get the necessary moral out of him. Is one doing an injury to Wordsworth's memory in mentioning such an obvious fact? We do not think so. We believe that the only way to enjoy Wordsworth is to read him with full knowledge of his imperfections. One can ignore his imperfections if one is not ignorant of them. If one goes to him, on the other hand, unprepared for his lapses from genius into bathos, one may easily be appalled by his lapses to such a degree as to under-estimate his genius. We have known persons of taste who regarded "The Leech-gatherer" as a funny poem, simply because Wordsworth is more interested in the ethical than in the dramatic situation in some of the last verses. He even tells us that the old man's speech was:—

"Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues."

It is not to the moral one objects. It is a noble moral. What one objects to is the otiose instruction. When one has objected one's fill, however, one begins to love the poem almost from beginning to end. One realizes that what Wordsworth chiefly suffered from was a lack of imaginative staying-power—that his imagination sometimes became exhausted sooner than his moral sense. That is why he often flies so near the level of the ground. For morality alone will not bring a poet to the ground. Morality touched with imagination becomes moral passion, and may give us an Isaiah, a Milton, or the Wordsworth of "Tintern Abbey."

It is only when the imagination is exhausted that morality becomes moral commonplace. There is no reason, save tiredness, why that great opening of "The Leech-gatherer" should not lead up to as great an ending. In the opening, however, he is writing freshly of sounds and sights that he had loved disinterestedly all his days. He does not soar with Mr. Fairchild on his back in these wonderful lines. Mr. Fairchild was at once the cause and the sign of his weariness at a later stage. But the opening is as free from Fairchildism as Chaucer. The lines are almost too well-known to quote, but it is a pleasure one cannot resist even to write down that glorious first verse, which delights one like a beautiful morning rather than like a piece of literature:—

"There was a roaring in the wind all night;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
The birds are singing in the distant woods;
Over its own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods;
The Jay makes answer and the Magpie chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters."

Here all the senses are at work—and not merely the moral sense—as they are in the last verses of the poem to the green linnet:—

"Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle in the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;
There! when the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings
That cover him all over

"My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A Brother of the dancing leaves;
Then flits, and from the cottage eaves
Pours forth his song in gushes;
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless form he chose to feign
While fluttering in the bushes."

It is not every one who will agree with Wordsworth's ecstatic appreciation of the green linnet's song. But who will fail to be infected by his ecstatic appreciation of the world in this poem? Who has not noticed just such "shadows and sunny glimmerings" on a bird among the leaves? To observe such things is, for some obscure reason, a constant refreshment; and Wordsworth passes on this refreshment, as no poet before him had done, to his readers.

Even if Wordsworth is most delightful of all as a poet of the senses, however, he would have meant considerably less to us if he had been a poet only of the senses. In our first youth, we may feel somewhat impatient of the poet who—apparently on moral grounds—preferred the song of the stock-dove to that of the passionate nightingale. Our ideal bird at that time is not one of which it can be said:—

"He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending;
Of serious faith, and inward glee;
That is the song—the song for me!"

Youth resents still more deeply the attack made on passion in "Laodamia," where the ghost of the husband upbraids his widow for still loving him too well:—

"Be taught, O faithful consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;
A fervent, not ungovernable, love;
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for briefly I sojourn."

This seems bad enough to anyone who happens to be in love. But there is worse to follow. In the first edition, Wordsworth had at least pity enough on Laodamia to hold out a sort of "larger hope" for her after death. In later editions, he decided that he must deal more sternly with an instance of such ungovernable passion. Hence he altered his mercy into judgment, and the final shape of his Fairchildian verse is:—

"Thus, all in vain exhorted and reprov'd,
She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers."

Stupidly and even sillily cruel as all this may seem to many people, we see here nevertheless simply the excess of that sense of duty, of the law running through all nature, that has given Wordsworth a place among the prophets as well as among the poets. He made himself the psalmist of this

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law, and, in its service, turned his back upon lawless passions. In his "Ode to Duty" he depicts it as the spirit that gives order even to the beauty of nature:—

"Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh
and strong."

There is certainly calm wisdom to be found in the poet of these lines as in no other English poet. The virtues have been too often annexed by the prosaic. Wordsworth identifies them with the beauty of the flowers and the stars. In so far as he is conventional and prejudiced, he alienates us from the virtues. In so far as he is imaginative and impassioned, he is one of the golden-tongued preachers. In the great "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," he is a seer uttering his vision in a beauty of phrase that had not been known since Milton. It is strange that, among the English poets, two of the greatest preachers should have been two of the greatest stylists. It is only in the great "Ode" and in some of the sonnets, it is true, that Wordsworth sustains this sublimity of style from beginning to end. The "Ode," however, is as perfect, in mere point of writing, as "The Grecian Urn."

Mr. Cobden-Sanderson's anthology is not, like Matthew Arnold's, a good book to choose as an introduction to Wordsworth. It is an anthology for the converted, who will delight in its ordered selection as well as in its beautifully printed pages. The editor, we think, goes too far in leaving out the titles of the poems or, at least, in relegating them to the list of contents. But it may be that in this way he gives a greater impression of one consecutive book. His selection is a guide to the philosophy of Wordsworth no less than to his poetry, and enables the reader to follow that conflict in the poet's soul between a single-minded love of nature and his later discovery of the mind of man as:—

"My haunt, and the main region of my song."

The anthology was privately printed some years ago at the Doves Press. In its present form, a wide circle of Wordsworthians will rejoice in it as a guide that will take them a new way among old fields.

THE TRAGEDY OF JOHN REDMOND.

"John Redmond's Last Years." By STEPHEN GWYNN.
(Arnold. 16s.)

MR. STEPHEN GWYNN'S account of the last years of John Redmond is the story of a double tragedy. It is the story of the rise to the summit of attainment, after the labor and devotion of a generation, and of the sudden, hopeless collapse of the Irish Constitutional movement. Irishmen saw what would have seemed in the early eighties a miracle: a Home Rule Act become law by the deliberate will of a British House of Commons, and the breaking of the power of their hereditary enemies in the British House of Lords. And they saw, a few months after, themselves and their life's work repudiated by the people for whom they had struggled, the leaders fiercely assailed as traitors, their work thrown into the gutter. The other tragedy is of an individual. At the beginning of this time, John Redmond was a secure, honored, admired man, the leader of his people into the promised land. Unspoiled by vanity, utterly lacking in personal ambition, indifferent to the meaner motives which ravage political life, he was content that the triumph was attained. At the end of it, deserted by his friends, attacked by his old comrades, bitterly assailed by the younger generation and hooted in the streets of Dublin, with all his policy shattered and his brother and others whom he had loved sent by him to death for an alien cause, he died of a broken heart. "Ireland must in ages gone have been guilty of abominable crimes," wrote Mr. James Stephens, "or she could not at this juncture have been afflicted with a John Redmond." Such was the epitaph on an Irish leader, from another who equally loved Ireland.

His consolation could only be that his experience was only in the tradition of all the Irish leaders who preceded him. They went out to battle and they fell.

Mr. Gwynn has provided an authentic piece of history: history in which he himself was one of the protagonists. It is told with skill, with distinction of style, with lucidity and an absence of bitterness. It might be the story of a contemporary revolution in Nicaragua. The indictment is sufficiently sweeping without invective: the reader is sufficiently moved by the arrangement of facts to the sense of the criminal folly of it all. At periods between the Elizabethan age and our own, England might be impeached for greater wickedness, at no period for greater foolishness. And just as at all times when bad work is being done an Irishman is found in the foreground, so here the sinister activities of Sir Edward Carson largely dominate the scene and ensure the destruction. The story opens—though there is a brief sketch of the earlier time—with the introduction of the Home Rule Bill in 1912. It passes through the stages of organized rebellion in Ulster, backed by British Tories: the Curragh mutiny, the gun running with impunity at Larne, the opposition gun running accompanied by suppression and bloodshed in Dublin. It culminates in Redmond's offer of Ireland and the Irish Volunteers to the British cause on August 2nd, 1914. And it passes from these through a series of disasters—the malignant stupidity of the Irish recruiting, the failure to put Home Rule into action, the formation of a Government with Carson in it (perhaps the most insane step of all), the Rebellion and its suppression, the rise and triumph of Sinn Féin, the Conference with its faint ray of hope, speedily destroyed by the threat of conscription. It ends with Redmond's death, and with nothing to contemplate but "clouds and darkness, and the light darkened in the heavens thereof."

Mr. Gwynn has given far the clearest account of the procession of events, and especially a fascinating narrative of the labors and personalities of the Convention. His book is almost indispensable to anyone who would wish to understand the relation of opinion to the controversy which is about to open concerning the new Home Rule Bill.

Of Redmond himself there is nothing very new or intimate revealed. He was a figure distinguished by simplicity and reticence. That he was a great orator is undisputed. That he was a great leader of men may well be a subject of controversy. He had nothing of the demonic spirit which frightens, as well as inspires, and snatches victory from immanent destruction. He commanded respect but not fear. He was passionately devoted to members of his family and his personal friends. But he was never happier than when away from controversy, and would probably have proved a better leader had he cared more for his personal position and future fame. He was a gentleman and a Conservative, and would have led and supported a Conservative Party in an Irish Parliament. There is a sense of the irony of things in comparing the slobbering compliments of his life-long political enemies at the end, with the hysterical invective of their early attacks on him. For years they tried to make this friendly, disinterested man the bogey of British politics. "He comes," they wrote in 1910, "he comes with the money of Patrick Ford, he comes—in short, he arrives." At his death the same people were hailing the same man as patriot, saint, and martyr. Of such stuff is humanity woven.

But Mr. Gwynn gives some illuminating glimpses of the man himself who, despite the seeming destruction of his life's work, has earned a permanent place in history:—

"He did his work in Parliament regularly and conscientiously, always there day in and day out, and it was work of a very exacting kind. This had become the routine of his existence and he did it without strain. But to go outside it was for him always an effort. He hated town life: but more than this, he hated ceremonies, presentations, receptions in hotels, and all the promiscuous contact of political gatherings. Nevertheless, when he came to such an occasion, no living man acquitted himself better. Apart from his oratory, he had an admirable manner, a dignified yet friendly courtesy, which gained attachment."

Modesty, combined with a certain degree of indolence, is the testimony of this friend, made him leave all that con-

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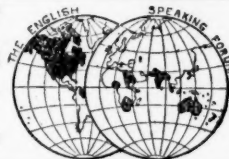
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tact with the mass of his followers, which is necessary to leadership, to be effected through his chief colleagues. He was most happy in the complete seclusion of his home in the Wicklow mountains, Aughavanagh, the old converted barracks which he had received from Parnell, of which this writer gives a fascinating description: "The almost unbroken wildness of his surroundings appealed to an element of romance in his character, which was strongly emotional though extremely reticent." Only an artist would have recognized beauty in these scenes, for in all Ireland it would be difficult to find a landscape with less amenity; the hill shapes were featureless, without boldness or intricacy of line. But "Ireland to him in a great measure was Aughavanagh, and Aughavanagh was a place of rest." It was not a lonely habitation, though seven miles from the nearest station, and when the motors came to make it accessible they were deeply resented by its owner.

This deliberate and extreme seclusion weakened his influence. "He was far too shrewd not to know this, and far too unambitious to care. He never shrank from work. He toiled through the unprofitable debates of some thirty-five Parliamentary Sessions. But he was bored with the daily solicitations of grievances and promotions. And in his periods of seclusion he refused to have anything at all to do with them. A similar feeling made him refuse all British hospitalities during his speaking engagements; and "many were the magnates of Liberalism," says Mr. Gwynn, "it was necessary to smooth down on this account. He detested always being lionized, and wanted always, when the public affair was over, to get away to his own quarters." Yet the demand for him on British platforms was incessant. Every constituency in the years before the war wanted Redmond and none other, and wherever he went he carried conviction by the dignity and power of his eloquence and his extraordinary gift for simplifying great issues.

When all has been said in criticism, and Mr. Gwynn is not sparing of it as he unfolds the tragic tale of decline—he remains convinced in belief in the greatness of his leader and his friend. "No man ever gave more service for less pay than the Nationalist leader, and it was the harder because he was a man who liked comfort and had no ambition." He could have achieved great fortune at the Irish or English Bar. As a political leader in Britain he would have been certain of a high place on the Treasury bench. He lived and died a comparatively poor man, with no political goad and spur but the hope of doing something for the welfare of Ireland. His relations with his followers in the party were courteous and cordial. But without the appearance of aloofness he was always aloof. He knew, Mr. Gwynn avers, the disability which his temperament laid upon him. He lacked the magnetic qualities which produce idolatry and blind allegiance. Yet he was a great man:—

"He was a great man, unlike others, cast in a mould of his own. Without the least affectation of unconventionality, and indeed under a formal appearance, he was profoundly unconventional. His tastes, whether in literature, in art, in the choice of society, in the choice of his way of life, were utterly his own, unaffected by any standard but that which he himself established. Without subtlety of interpretation, his judgment cuts deep into the heart of things. You could not hear him speak, could not be in his presence, without feeling the weight of his personality."

The end is a tragedy. After the death of his brother he retires "like a wounded creature" to his mountain solitude, sick at heart, only to emerge to attend the funeral of a life-long friend, Pat O'Brien, when at Glashavin, "then, and then only in his lifetime, people saw him publicly break down: he had to be led away from the grave." He refused to attempt to guide the Convention, and although his occasional speeches there—reprinted, from notes taken, in this volume—show his talent at its highest, the sadness to which his temperament was subject gained on the national optimism which for so many years had allowed him to credit men with honest motives and with his own love of Ireland. He died as the Convention flickered before extinction, and hope vanished from his land.

A MAN WITH TWO EYES.

"Enjoying Life and Other Literary Remains of W. N. P. Barbellion." (Chatto & Windus. 6s. net.)

It would be interesting to know what would be thought of "Enjoying Life" by a man who had not read the "Journal." In Barbellion's first book our chief interest was to track down the individual who wrote it; there was something unusual and yet representative of our age about the book; we were spying upon the secret hopes and fears of one of those mysterious young moderns who are at once more adventurous and more afraid of life than we of a somewhat older generation. The "Journal" enabled us to get a pretty clear idea of Barbellion, and furnished the clue to much that perplexed us in our young contemporaries. This interest in the man himself was so keen that our attempt to estimate his work as a literary achievement was, in comparison, perfunctory. In the presence of this second volume, however, we are enabled to preserve a greater detachment. The first part of the book gives us a little more of that voluminous diary, and the extracts seem chosen for being as far away as possible from the key of the first book. They testify to an insatiable joy in life, in any and every manifestation of life. "I have been too long now in love with this wicked old earth to wish to change one jot or one tittle of it. I am loath to surrender even the Putumayo atrocities." As long as things continue to go on, he doesn't mind what they are—only let them go on. Activity, activity! We are only little atoms, and perhaps the whole performance is meaningless, but, in the name of heaven, let us rush about! "I like all things which are swift or immense—lightning, Popocatepetl, London, Roosevelt!" Nothing shows more clearly that Barbellion was a sick man than this strident ode to joy. One recalls certain passages of Nietzsche and one's experiences under an anæsthetic. But this is what we should expect. We could deduce that such positive happiness as came to Barbellion would wear this hectic flush. Our present concern is to note that the mood has been given fine expression: "The world is a ship, on an unknown and dangerous commission. But I, for my part, as a silly shipboy, will stand on the ratlines and cheer."

While this mood lasted he had a fit of reading everything. The "Encyclopædia Britannica" became one of his favorite books. "I looked up any word I thought upon—pins, nutmegs, Wallaby—it's a terrible game!—and gorged!" It is indeed a terrible game. Knowledge is now so attractive and so accessible that, unless a man has an overmastering passion or a merciful indifference, he is only too prone to gorge. We cannot say what would have been Barbellion's fate. His interest in biology was genuine enough, but there are signs that the British Museum was killing it. A man so conscious of the "rush" of things cannot settle down permanently to the classification of worms. His literary interests, too, were growing in scope and intensity. There are essays in this book which show that Barbellion suffered from the genuine *cacoëthes scribendi*, since some of them were obviously written for the mere fun of writing. The two short stories belong to this genre; they witness to Barbellion's curiosity about his own literary powers, and they have no other interest. The very deliberate essay "On Journal Writers" has careful stylistic passages which give the whole thing somewhat the air of an exercise. It is evident, then, that Barbellion was interested in writing for its own sake to an extent very unusual amongst scientific men, even those who write well. We are, indeed, of the opinion that Barbellion was primarily a literary man; his reactions, as it were, are always literary; his interest in science often seems curiously unscientific; he is forever asking himself what it is for, and his evanescent determination to become a specialist on beetles is prompted by a sudden glimpse of himself as a "character," with microscope, spectacles, and pedantic, quaint conversation all complete. As a matter of fact he would have gratified this impulse by writing a very entertaining literary study—a novel or what not—of the narrow specialist he could never have become.

We think, indeed, that Barbellion, had he lived, would have provided one of those rare bridges between the artist and the man of science. He could understand, intimately, the motives and satisfactions which make science, and we think he could have presented them in a work of art. He was a denizen of both kingdoms; the danger was that his allegiance

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AMONGST THE PROFITS.

BY H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

THE large fat man stepped into the five thousand guinea Rolls Royce, and lighting his five shilling cigar, turned up the collar of his five hundred guinea fur coat and flung himself back on the sumptuous cushions.

"Drive to the nearest Profiteering Tribunal," commanded the large fat man. "I want something to laugh at till six o'clock, when I can buy some more champagne."

And the great car stole silently away.

"Who is that?" I asked an awestruck policeman.

"That?" he repeated in astonishment, "Do you mean to say you don't know 'im? That's — made millions in whisky, during the war, 'e did."

I inquired the nearest way to the Tribunal.

In the front row of the seats allotted to the public sat several large fat men, with red faces, and fat red hands. Massive gold chains festooned their massive stomachs, and as they listened to the complaints they chuckled apoplectically until they quivered like huge expressive jellies.

"The Tribunal is of opinion that a gross over-charge has been made," boomed the chairman's voice, and the small trader in the dock became pallid with apprehension. "The sum of 2d., which represents a conscienceless over-charge, must be refunded to the complainant, whom we congratulate on his courage in bringing this nefarious case before us."

I lost interest and dozed.

I woke with a start.

An indescribable change had come over the scene.

The dock was tenanted by large, fat men, who clutched the rail nervously with their coarse bejewelled hands.

Again the chairman's voice rang out, but this time it sounded like the voice of doves.

"You," he pronounced, addressing the first trembling wretch, "have been proved to have made a war profit of many millions, wrung out of your fellow-countrymen in their necessity. That you are a distiller and that the Government is sharing profits with you is no defence. 'You,' he turned to the next, "confess to a war profit of many millions wrung out of the housewives of the nation while their men were at war. That you deal in cotton and that the Government shares with you by the Excess Profit Tax is no defence. 'You—"

But the moans and screams for mercy became so loud that I woke from the dream within a dream.

The gasping chuckles of one of the fat men had awakened me. They had ceased to pay any attention to the Tribunal proceedings and were discussing their own cleverness.

"Yes," giggled one, "there was a flaw in the contract, so they couldn't stop me going on turning out aeroplanes, and they had to pay for 'em, even if they did scrap 'em as soon as I delivered them."

"You can't profiteer in my line," boasted another proudly, "my goods aren't on the list."

"I said to the Government take it or leave it. That's my price," announced a third. "I knew that they had to have the stuff, naturally I squeezed 'em."

"I've dodged 'em by giving the surplus to the shareholders," confided yet another, "me and my family hold most of the shares," he added chuckling.

The Tribunal ordered a refund of 1d., pronounced the voice of the chairman, "and is, moreover, of the opinion that a singularly gross case of profiteering has been established. The thanks of the community are due to the heroic complainant."

Whereupon the wretched little draper, found guilty of a conscienceless attempt to squeeze a little more out of a reel of cotton to pay for his increased cost of living, swooned.

How long are we going to submit to these fantastic interferences with liberty? The prices charged by this House for Lounge Suits vary from ten to sixteen guineas. A charge of profiteering would be welcomed, and then the Profiteering Tribunal may be promised the time of their lives.

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might prove too equally divided. There is no need to insist on the loss we have suffered from his death. If our estimate is right he would have been more valuable, in his double capacity, than if he had been either a great writer or a great man of science; artists are becoming more and more alive to what we may call the artistic value of science. We want these interpreters in every branch of science; it is time the lingering traces of unintelligent hostility between the two chief intellectual activities of man were wiped out. If we read the last essays in this book, essays on purely scientific subjects, we shall see that a scientific investigation may have an aesthetic quality. After all, there are men whose dominant interest is not sexual love; we should like to see a genuine presentment in literature of the scientific man; we are as curious and ignorant of his inner life as we are of that of the musical composer. Barbellion was sufficiently scientist and artist for the purpose—and his introspection, embodied in a fiction, would lose whatever was repellent in it in the "Journal." In reading these literary remains we more than ever feel the lack of that big book that Barbellion did not write.

A CHINAMAN ON CHINA.

"Modern China: A Political Study." By SHI-GUNG CHENG.
(Clarendon Press.)

If it were possible for us to see events in the proportion in which they will appear to posterity, maybe the affairs of Europe, now bulking so large in our interest, would seem insignificant compared with those of the Far East. Europe, very likely, is finished, as a great historic force. She has committed *harikari*. But China, perhaps, is only beginning. Yet little is known and less is thought about Chinese affairs. Few perhaps even desire to remove their ignorance. Those who do have an opportunity in Mr. Cheng's admirable and lucid sketch.

Since the revolution of 1912 China has passed through many political vicissitudes, and is still in a state of flux. The republic has not been able definitely to establish itself, although attempts at monarchical restorations, hitherto, have failed. Yuan-Shi-Kai, the first President, took an early opportunity to assume autocratic power. But his attempt to make himself Emperor, in 1915, was met by rebellion, and he had to succumb to the storm. His death, in June, 1916, removed China's one "strong man," and since then the country has fallen into what, anywhere else, would be anarchy, Presidents quarrelling with Prime Ministers, Parliaments with both, and provincial governors asserting themselves by military force against the central authority. In the midst of all this, however, Chinese life proceeds, based on the family and the village, according to its immemorial usage.

To Western eyes, always somewhat impatient of their own institutions, when imported into strange lands, the discussion of constitutional forms, under these conditions, is apt to seem irrelevant. We easily arrive at the conclusion that all that is wanted in China is government by the strong hand. That is not Mr. Cheng's view, and he devotes half his book to a discussion of the abortive constitutions of the Republic and to suggestions for their amendment. He advocates a President with real powers, to be elected by the provincial legislatures; a two-chambered legislature, the lower house to be elected on a wide franchise and a Cabinet responsible to the elected Chamber. How all this would work out in a country like China it is impossible to foresee; and for the moment the question is academic, since China is in a state of chronic civil war.

For Western readers, the immediate interest lies rather in her foreign relations than in her domestic problems. But the two are connected. For the internal chaos gives opportunity to neighbors to fish in the troubled waters; and Japan has made full use of the chance. She is indeed suspected of deliberately fostering the disorder in order to pursue her own purposes. And it is certain that she has made loans to the Peking Government, at the price of concessions such as perhaps could only have been extorted from a Government driven to straits by civil war. In truth, Japan has profited by the great war and by the civil dissensions in China, to establish there a privileged position which may be more pregnant with

danger to the future peace of the world than anything that has been done in the West.

The story of these encroachments by Japan has often been dealt with in these columns. What happened, briefly, was that in 1915 China was presented by Japan, at the point of the sword, with a series of demands the acceptance of which would almost have reduced her to the position of a dependency. The more extreme claims she was able to reject. But she had to concede what amounted to a political and economic hegemony of Japan over Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, and also to accept the substitution of Japan for Germany in Shantung. This latter arrangement was agreed to by the States of the Entente, behind China's back, at the time she entered the war, and at Paris the Chinese delegates were presented with the *fait accompli*. True, Japan has agreed to restore to China the nominal sovereignty over Shantung; but as she retains all the economic privileges conceded to Germany, and a number of new ones extorted by herself, this concession is not of much practical importance. Japan, henceforth, will have a port of entry at Kiaochau, and the control of the railways through Shantung leading into the heart of China. But Shantung, it must be remembered, is really what in Europe would be a State, of thirty million inhabitants; and it is also the province most dear to the Chinese for its associations, for it was the birthplace of Confucius and contains his tomb. No wonder popular feeling in China has been deeply stirred, and has manifested itself, in a practical way, by an anti-Japanese boycott.

It is plain that all this threatens seriously the future peace of the world. In the first place, it may lead to war between the United States and Japan. In the second place, it may lead to the militarization of China, either under Japan or against her. No one can have talked to Chinese friends, in recent years, without observing how they are being driven by events out of their natural and traditional pacifism. They attribute all the misfortunes of China to her military weakness, and conclude that the only remedy will be for her to arm. The logic is irrefutable, in such a world as the Western Powers have made, and if the old policies and ideas are to continue to prevail, our posterity may see the march of yellow millions across Europe, armed with the latest lethal weapons. For militarism destroys its own children, and the only thing that force can do is to evoke a force stronger than itself.

The alternative is the League of Nations with all that it implies. And if the League is really to mature, one of its first and most urgent concerns will be the Far East. That, however, does not seem to be Mr. Cheng's view. His solution appears to be a general "hands off" to foreign States. He rejects, root and branch, the idea of international intervention and control. He desires, indeed, the assistance and co-operation of foreign capital and skill, but on the basis of private enterprise. The difficulty about this is, that Western capital will not in fact flow into China without special guarantees, of a political kind. Further, if there is no international action by the Powers, there will be individual action, and the extortion of concessions, political and economic, by this or that Power will continue, the activity of one leading to similar activities by others.

Non-intervention does not seem to be a practicable policy nor one calculated to further the interests of China herself. An alternative would be a new "consortium" such as, we understand, is being now negotiated, whereby the financial needs of China could be met by joint action according to the capacities of the various States to supply them, and under conditions involving the minimum of foreign rapacity. It is, indeed, natural that Chinese patriots, after their experiences of the past, should look with suspicion on such projects. And for that reason it might be suggested that any new consortium formed should be conducted under the general control of the League of Nations, in order that no one group of Powers may take an unfair advantage of the weakness of China. Any such scheme, however, must start by the renunciation, by all States, of any existing special privileges they may have secured. This will be a hard saying, particularly to Japan. But Japan has, in the long run, far more to gain by entering honestly into a scheme of international comity, than by playing a lone hand for the hegemony of the East. And there are Japanese patriots who recognize the fact,

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The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

RUMOR has been busy with the possibility of a new British Government Loan for the purpose of providing funds to pay off the £141 millions of Exchequer Bonds maturing next month and other approaching obligations. National Expenditure Certificates and 4 per cent. tax free stock were two favorite suggestions put forward of the form of security. The issue of a new Government security is thought probable in well-informed quarters, but at the moment of writing the rumors are unsupported. Maturing obligations have to be met, but the Government is hoping to do well out of realizing war assets before March 31st, and heavy items of revenue are due. Though these factors relieve the position, it is thought that the Government will not care to meet its obligations wholly by temporary borrowing. The Revenue and Expenditure figures for the first ten days of the year show a reduction of £34 millions in Ways and Means advances to a total of £209 millions, but sales of Treasury Bills were heavy at £134½ millions, against £95½ millions repaid. War Saving Certificates made a good start for the year, purchases less repayments being £1½ millions. The normal return of currency notes from circulation after the Christmas and end of the year expansion enabled the fiduciary issue to be brought well below the 1920 legal maximum, without the addition of Bank of England Notes to the reserve. In the Money Market rates have been steadily hardening. The only movement of note among the foreign exchanges has been a further movement in our favor of the Paris and Brussels rates. Silver has soared again, and at one time approached 7s. an oz., after which a slight reaction occurred. China is still buying voraciously.

BANKING RESULTS.

The preliminary statements of the Joint Stock Banks which have been dribbling out during the last ten days or so present no surprises. None of London's "big five" make any change from last year's dividend rates, though three provincial banks, *viz.*, the Lancashire and Yorkshire, the Manchester and Liverpool and District, and the Munster and Leinster, raise their distributions for the year from 18 per cent. to 19 per cent., from 17 11-12 per cent. to 18½ per cent., and from 17½ per cent. to 20 per cent. respectively. At the same time the three chief discount houses of London—the National, the Union, and Alexander's, all make a slight advance in their rates. The first year of reconstruction after war was, on the whole, a favorable period for the Banks. The great demand for financial accommodation by the industrial and trading community provided the occasion for heavy and profitable business; but, on the other hand, the continued depreciation in the Banks' holdings of gilt-edged securities called for larger allocations out of profits for writing-down purposes than were required in the previous year. Most branches of banking expenses have been higher, though a very considerable decline must have taken place in allowances to men on active service. The general story is one of record gross profits sadly reduced by the necessary depreciation allowances. The preliminary statement of Lloyd's and of the London Joint City & Midland illustrate this tendency. The former's profit was nearly £520,000 higher than in 1918, but the writing down of investments requires £1,150,000, against £200,000. The latter's profits show a rise of £379,000, but for depreciation of War Loans and future contingencies a sum of £1,000,000 has to be set aside. Similarly the London County & Westminster & Parr's show an increase of just short of a quarter of a million in profits, but allow a full million for investment depreciation. The yield on the shares of the great London Banks ranges at present from about 6 2-5 per cent. to 5½ per cent. Only a few actual reports are yet available. These, and more especially the chairmen's speeches at the annual meetings, will be awaited this year with more than usual interest.

THE RISE IN MEXICANS.

Time and again during recent years the outlook in Mexico has brightened and new hopes of renewed stability and prosperity have sent Mexican securities jumping upward. Too often, however, clouds have gathered again. The recent

rise in Mexican securities, which has been fairly well held although quotations have sagged a little this week, was inspired by one of these outbursts of renewed hope. Some instances of how quotations have risen above the level in force at the end of 1919 are given below. For purposes of comparison I also show the highest price touched by each security in 1918:—

	Price Dec. 31st, 1919.	Price Jan. 15th, 1919.	Highest Price of 1918.
5% Cons. External Loan ...	46½	53	80
6% 10 yr. Treas. Bonds ...	63½	71	80½
Mexican Railway:—			
Ordinary Stock ...	17	22	26
8% Non. cum. 1st Pref. ...	43	53	73½
6% Non. cum. 2nd Pref. ...	24	33	45½
Mexico North-Western Railway:—			
5% 1st Mortg. Gold Bonds ...	14½	17½	29½
Mexico Tramways:—			
Common Stock ...	30	32½	41
6% 50 yr. Mortg. Bonds ...	29	35½	56
Mexican Light and Power:—			
1st Gold Bonds ...	52½	57	73

Expectations of receiving distributions in arrear are in some cases an important factor. The immediate reason for the recent advance is the mission of the Mexican Financial Adviser to Europe to organize the resumption of payments on the external debt which were suspended in 1914. Carranza claims to have put the Mexican national finances on a sound basis, and that developments of the country's resources are under way. No doubt there are possibilities about the situation, but the achievement of domestic peace and good order are the first necessity, and, as far as present indications go, the desired degree of internal stability has not yet been effected. Possibly the good financial intentions which the Mexican Government are advertising may be regarded as an indispensable prelude to an attempt to raise a loan in Europe.

STOCK MARKETS AND NEW ISSUES.

The Stock Markets have been somewhat irregular, and the prospect of selling from ex-enemy countries, as soon as the Treasury permits it, is being taken into consideration. The gilt-edged market was only slightly and temporarily affected by the new loan rumors referred to above. Among foreigners French were weak, and Mexicans drooped after their recent spurt which I discuss elsewhere. Chinese stocks, curiously, were not assisted by the excellent figures of the Maritime Customs. Oil shares have been booming, with Shells, Eagles, Burmahs, and Scottish Americans among the most buoyant issues. In the rubber share market the tone, though a little easier is by no means bad. Although the market rise, which a fortnight ago looked like gathering strength, has been temporarily checked, I see no reason for anything but optimism on the part of rubber shareholders. The prospective demand for rubber is on a large scale and the industry is in a sound condition. The price of the raw material is at a lucrative height and plantation companies have been able to make excellent forward contracts. I expect 1920 to be a good year for rubber shareholders. The shares of a number of comparatively young plantation companies with large areas just coming into the yielding stage are still cheap enough to attract the investor. I hope to return to this subject shortly. Home rails have remained under the depressing influence of the labor position, although strike fears are declining. Among the new issues of the week the principal is the offer by the Government of Western Australia of £1,500,000 5½ per cent. inscribed stock at the price of £98 per cent. The stock is redeemable in 1940, or at the option of the Government at any time after 1930. This is a sound trustee investment offering a yield of £5 17s. per cent. An issue of 154,500 7½ per cent. cumulative preference shares at par is made by H. H. & S. Budgett & Co. Ltd., a wholesale grocery concern that has expanded from an old-established firm. The clear statement of profits since 1912 and of the balance sheet position contained in the prospectus is a point in its favor. The dividend is well covered and the security reasonable, but there are more attractive securities to be bought on the Stock Exchange to yield 7½ per cent.

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